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THE NEW PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

An Odyssey of the Unemployed

BY ROBERT WHITCOMB

I

AFTER several months of riding freight trains, joining bread lines, sleeping in jails or Salvation Army 'flophouses' or box cars, I began to realize that Wall Street had crashed and that unemployment was a national problem. At first I had no idea of the magnitude of the disaster; I saw it all purely in terms of my own personal difficulties. All that I knew was that I had been fired out of an unsatisfactory newspaper job in a suburb of New York City and would have to look for another berth.

After I had failed to find work in New York, I decided to 'hit the road' south and try my luck elsewhere. It struck me then as a particularly happy solution of my problem and I made a gay start. I had seventeen dollars in my pocket and was leaving no dependents behind me. All I needed to do was to support myself. If I could earn enough to pay for my meals and lodging, I could keep going indefinitely until I found steady work. When I went broke, I thought, I could stop wherever I happened to be and pick up expenses by doing odd jobs — fixing fences, mowing lawns, hoeing gardens,

running errands, washing dishes. I would not even balk at such manual labor as working on a railroad section or on the highway, or digging ditches, picking fruit, shocking wheat, chopping trees — anything the world would pay for.

United States Highway No. 1, which runs along the Atlantic Coast from Maine to Florida, was thronged with pedestrians in January of 1930 when I set out upon it, headed south. There was a sprinkling of adventurers, most of them posing as hatless college boys with Boston bags. Some were disappointed office workers on their way from New York to Miami. A few were obviously just graduating from the Boy Scouts and were indulging their *Wanderlust*. Nine tenths of them, however, were workmen in overalls. By the time I came to the short-leaf pines and open spaces south of Richmond, I had talked with a number of these men and learned that many were heads of families forced away from home by unemployment. Among them were skilled laborers, — carpenters, plasterers, operators of machines, — most of them willing enough to forgo their union status if they could only find some sort

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of work at any sort of wages. All of these wanderers were trying to 'hitch-hike' their way along, but it was a discouraging business; their numbers had spoiled the sport, and most of them were doing more hiking than hitching.

On the northern edge of South Carolina my eyes were opened to a new aspect of the situation. As I came abreast of a patch of pine woods a red-faced man stepped out of a parked car and demanded to know where I was going. I asked whose business it was, whereupon he brandished a six-shooter and threatened to show me the inside of the county jail. Somehow I managed to conciliate him, and as his wrath subsided he explained that so many 'bums' were traveling through that citizens had to watch their property. For the first time I realized the dangers of being a stranger, particularly a stranger on foot. Later I learned that the wise vagrant is aware of this peril and prepares himself to meet it when it arises. I ran across one young hobo who carried a copy of the New Testament in his pocket for the sole purpose of impressing those officers of the law who chose to search him.

I rode through South Carolina and Georgia in one lucky lift and then made for New Orleans. By this time I had exhausted my slender resources and found myself walking the streets of a strange city without a penny to my name. I had definitely joined the ranks of the 'down-and-outers.' This last was a subtle shift which I hardly noticed at the time. I was young, husky, and willing to work; like Mr. Micawber, I felt that something was bound to turn up. Besides, I was experiencing the same sensations which an explorer must feel when he ventures into unknown territory: I was curious to catch a glimpse of human nature in the raw and see for myself how men treated their less fortunate fellows. So, hum-

bly, hopefully, I applied for work. As failure followed failure, I fought against the thought that my outlook was desperate.

If I had purposely planned to test my chances under the most unfavorable circumstances, I could not have hit upon a worse place than New Orleans at this time. I had arrived in the city at the height of that hysterical season which they call Mardi Gras. From all the corners and hollows of the earth tourists and sight-seers were pouring in, and they were followed by a ragged army of hoboes, bums, street fakers, and touts who converged upon the city from every point of the compass. While the carnival reigns it is always a problem for the New Orleans police to keep an eye on pickpockets, and this year the depression had made their task doubly difficult. Crowds of jobless outcasts shuffled through the streets. The authorities made up their minds that unemployment was not to be tolerated. A general clean-up was chronicled in the newspapers and every day hundreds of unfortunates were literally kicked out of town. Scores of others were arrested on the charge of 'no visible means of support' and were herded into the lice-ridden cells of Parish Prison. So rigorous were the police that laborers walking home from work were occasionally picked up and forced to spend a night in jail before they could prove their residence, their solvency, and their employment.

I had already had several brushes with the police and I knew their attitude. 'No visible means of support' is the club they use in sending many an innocent victim to jail for weeks on end. So far I had escaped this penalty, and on one occasion by a very narrow margin. I had tried to get out of town before I was thrown out, but was turned back in a freight yard by a pugnacious railroad detective. Fortu-

nately, he let me off with a surly warning. 'Don't let me lay eyes on you again,' he said, shoving me by the shoulder. 'You've got too damn much nerve, out seeing the country while respectable people must pay their way.' So I began to realize what I was in for.

At this juncture I heard that men were wanted on the banana wharf, unloading the heavy bunches of fruit at thirty-five cents an hour. I applied, only to be told that the jobs had all been taken. As I turned to leave the place, I observed a 'No Smoking' sign and put my pipe in my pocket; but a 'copper' had seen me and came running up excitedly. After so many weeks of tramping about, I presented anything but a prepossessing appearance: my clothes were baggy and covered with mud, and I was sadly in need of a shave. The cop gave me one quick glance and launched into a flood of abusive language. Then he asked me a lot of personal questions. I tried to answer courteously, but I might better have saved my breath. He was one of the kind to whom 'orders is orders,' and since I had been caught smoking on the sacred banana wharf of New Orleans there was nothing for it but that I must be arrested for investigation. While we were waiting for the patrol wagon, a well-dressed man in the company of a woman passed by smoking a cigarette; my captor politely informed him that smoking was not permitted.

This was the first time I had ever been arrested and it gave me my first introduction to a 'bull pen.' I was thrown into a large cell crowded with nearly a hundred prisoners of all shades and conditions—drunks, 'dopes,' Negroes, fops, old men, burly and surly brutes, all waiting to face the judge in the morning. Among them were skilled mechanics whose only crime was unemployment. The place

was brilliantly lighted and it seethed with cursing, vomiting, snoring men who slept all over the floor. As I surveyed this pirate's crew, I tried to pick out the hardened criminals from the mere down-and-outers, and I could not. I was beginning to feel a mental kinship with these underdogs whose circumstances had placed them outside the law.

My sympathies were particularly aroused by one old man with ragged clothes and matted hair who sat on a concrete bench, his head sunk in his hands. Now and then he opened his eyes wearily at some fresh disturbance. By easy questioning I learned some of his history. He was a Florida carpenter, and at one time he had had a home of his own and money in the bank. The collapse of the land boom had paralyzed the building trades, and the depression which followed had ruined him. With his home wiped out and his savings all but exhausted, he had been compelled to hit the road with his tool bag. The last of his money was soon spent and there was no carpentry work anywhere. The only employment he found between Florida and New Orleans was in the pine forests, and that was too strenuous for him. A younger man jumped quickly into the vacancy he left. Finally he wearied of his heavy tool kit and threw it away. He kept drifting, walking almost every step of the way. He slept by the road, begging food at stores and homes. When he reached the city, he was arrested for vagrancy and now he seemed to think that he would be sentenced to thirty days. Although he dreaded the intolerable conditions of the New Orleans jails, he welcomed the thought of being released from the responsibility of getting food and carrying on.

When my case came up, I was lucky to get a 'floater'—a discharge with a warning to leave town within a few

hours. Meanwhile I had heard about the Llano del Rio Colony in western Louisiana, near Leesville, which is run as a coöperative venture. There, I was told, I could earn food, clothing, and shelter; they had no unemployment. I determined to go there. Being a young and husky worker, I was accepted without any cash payment for membership, and I soon discovered that many a young hobo took advantage of this hospitality to winter in the colony for his keep. I came to the place with high hopes, but I left it feeling that I had witnessed the failure of a communistic experiment on American soil.

II

Fifteen years ago Llano was organized on a mud flat which was at that time the site of a deserted lumber camp. Since then hundreds have joined it and left it, but the population still manages to keep ahead of the original group. Everybody except the youngest children works eight hours a day, receiving no money but sharing all things in common. Everyone eats in the community dining hall, cafeteria style. The work, which is not strenuous, allows for a wide range of aptitudes. There are a farm and a garden, a sawmill, an ice plant, a printing shop, a laundry, a general store, a tailor shop, a shoe shop, a library, and a garage. There are also a dance hall, an orchestra, and a rudimentary theatre.

The colonists think of the outside world as tottering and the capitalistic system as about to crash. While I was there the weekly newspaper printed a front-page open letter to President Hoover from the Llano dictator, George T. Pickett, informing him that the 'Llano Way' was the only way to solve national unemployment, and that given the land, the equipment, and proper

leadership, the army of the unemployed could soon be supporting itself without money. One gathered that Mr. Pickett knew who could supply the leadership.

In spite of the brave spirit of most of its people, Llano is an unhappy place. A cloud of drab desolation seems to hang over it. Everyone is ill clad in patched, secondhand clothing. While I was there most of the men were wearing suits from a shipment of drivers' uniforms which had come from R. H. Macy's in New York. Their food is extremely plain, the staples being rice, sweet potatoes, and gravy; so unvarying is the diet that one of the school children named these three delicacies as the principal products of the state. The community is full of elderly Middle-Western farmers who have sunk their last dollar in a Llano membership and are depressed by the feeling that they are married to the place, for better or for worse, until death do them part. Even the children are a joyless lot. The older ones work in the fields during half of each day in a special 'Kid Kolony,' and they struck me as being the most vulgar and obscene little ragamuffins that I had ever met with. The workers' councils and the dictatorship of the fiery little manager are very suggestive of Soviet Russia; in their so-called psychological meetings they wage bitter battles over petty questions of authority. I soon lost whatever enthusiasm I had worked up over their ideas, and in the end I left before I was kicked out.

From Llano I hitch-hiked to Fort Worth, Texas. I had now grown utterly despondent. Wherever I went I encountered the same stagnation of business. I had come two thousand miles in search of work, and the only things I had to show for my pains were tattered clothes and empty pockets. Moreover, my seedy appearance now made it almost impossible for me to get

any lifts from motorists; when I signaled to a passing car, the driver would give one look at me and step on the gas. I had become a suspicious character. This drove me to 'hopping' my first freight; it was either that or walk.

Hitch-hiking is a lonely business, but freight riding is full of companionship in misery. I was plunged at once into the mysteries of professional hobodom and learned to think in terms of railroad divisions, 'brakies,' 'shacks,' 'dicks,' 'bulls,' and 'red-ball' and 'manifest' expresses. I grew accustomed to approaching groups of hoboos as one of them, exchanging information about rumors of construction jobs and the intricacies of railroad yards. Little by little I came to realize that riding freights is like an exciting game, with the lost goals symbolized at best by a term in jail and at worst by an amputated leg or an unmarked grave in potter's field.

From Fort Worth I started toward Oklahoma City by rail, but was stranded off the main line in Shawnee along with a tall lad of twenty who said he came from Arkansas. As we camped in a 'jungle' around a fire, waiting for a train to pass, he told me his story. When he left school, he had gone to work on pipe lines in or near the oil fields. Then, considering himself a man with a trade and a future, he married a girl from his home town. Shortly afterward the pipe line was finished and he had to look for another job; meanwhile the effects of the Wall Street crash were being felt in the Middle West and there was no work to be had. Leaving his wife with her people, he set out to look elsewhere and he was now on his way to the oil fields at Oklahoma City. For several weeks he had been traveling without money and had had very little to eat. He appeared to be almost starving and devoured ravenously some bread that I

gave him; indeed, that was what had set him talking about himself.

We rode the same train that night. Every few minutes he would mutter hopelessly that if he did n't get something to do pretty soon he would rob somebody. He felt, and made me feel, abjectly depressed. At dawn, as we approached the city with its hundreds of pumping oil wells, his manner changed. 'Listen to them rigs!' he exclaimed with enthusiasm. Just then he spotted a long pipe line running along the ground as far as we could see in the semi-darkness. 'They're laying a line. Come on — you can get a job, too.' He hopped off. For some reason I stayed where I was and kept on west into the city, but the memory of his hollow face with dark rings under the eyes and of his toes just coming through the holes in his shoes remained with me; I could not forget him even in the months of misery that followed when I heard the same story, with variations, over and over again.

In Oklahoma City crowds of overalled and heavy-booted men stood about in the streets. I asked them what chance a man had in the oil fields. They told me that all the jobs had been filled long since, but that men were still pouring in from all over the world because they had heard about the oil boom. The city, they said, had been maintaining bread lines for local men out of work, but was unable to do anything for the army of 'foreigners.' Later that same day I rode west out of Oklahoma City, wondering how my young friend from Arkansas had fared and hoping that his unusual enthusiasm had won him a place where others had failed.

III

At El Reno, Oklahoma, my next stop, I was held up several days by a railroad detective who had developed

peculiar methods of his own for dealing with hoboes. At every railroad yard where valuable freight pauses temporarily, detectives are stationed to guard the property; but it is not an easy thing to do, for some of the yards are miles long. This bull at El Reno is an elderly man who takes the responsibilities of his job very seriously. By firing a pistol into the air, he frightens all the free 'passengers' off the freights as they pass through. This, as it happens, works a great hardship on the town, because the hungry men collect there in large numbers, begging food; and if they cannot beg it they steal it. Once a week, however, the detective has his day off, and then all the accumulated hoboes hop the same train.

That gathering at El Reno, which soon numbered several dozen, gave me some opportunity for observation. We were collected in the jungle off the railroad property, beside a muddy river. The weather was cold and rainy, the farmers were hostile, and we were lonely, idle, and depressed. There was no food, and therefore no cooking. Nobody knew just when the train would come that would be unguarded, so we hated to go away, even to get food, for fear of being stranded there another week. Conversation was at low ebb, but surged up sporadically, usually about wheedling meals from kind-hearted people, a little about the new oil fields at Hobbs, New Mexico, and other topics such as train routes, prize fighters, murders, or socialism.

In the group were a few old-timers who looked upon work as vulgar, and several horny-handed day laborers who were plainly stamped with the self-respect of men who know all about the dignity of labor. Then there were two admirably built young fellows in black sweaters, whose faces were almost the same color. They were sheet-metal

workers from West Virginia. Being laid off, they tried to get into the Navy, but failed. Now they were going through to California, where they knew a foreman in a steel mill. They had not washed since they left West Virginia, had scarcely eaten, and had had only one good sleep — in a box car. They were dead broke, but kept going on their nerve.

Another man, bound for Hobbs, was an experienced oil-field worker who said he was married. He carried a suitcase tied with a rope over his shoulder and had an overcoat slung over his arm.

Later, when everybody in the jungle dashed out to climb aboard the same freight, I saw this overloaded man trip on the overcoat and go heels over head, just missing the wheels. But he scrambled up, and he and I made the same car. There was nowhere to hide, so we clung to opposite sides between two box cars. The conductor, passing over the top, spotted the pair of us and literally climbed down on top of me. He was one of the few really mean railroad men that I encountered. It seemed necessary to his honor and dignity to kick me off the train, and by kick I mean *kick*, for he used his heel and ground it into my shoulder. Somehow I managed to hold my grip until the train had gathered speed; then I induced him to let me stay on until the first stop, when he saw to it that all of us were again stranded.

Shortly afterward, when we had caught another freight and were nearing Amarillo in the Panhandle of Texas, hoboes kept jumping on at each small division until our box car had accumulated fifty-odd. As our numbers increased our spirits rose and we gave vent to much smart talk. The President was roundly flayed as the prime cause of all evil, and a member of the train crew who stuck his head in at the

side door was just as roundly booed. At one point the railroad tracks ran parallel to the highway and we passed one of those 'Forward America' signs with its catchwords painted in huge letters: 'Business Is Good — Keep It Good.' Every man jack of us guffawed uproariously. We knew how to take a joke, even when it was on us.

I traveled for several divisions into New Mexico with one of this group. He was a six-foot Hollander, a plasterer by trade. Until a month prior to the time I met him he had been the affluent owner of an automobile; he had toured almost every state in the Union with his wife and daughter. Now he was willing to take any kind of job that would pay for his meals and leave him a dollar to send home — and he could n't find it. He looked over every town through which we passed for construction work. When he was hungry he felt that the only honorable thing for him to do was to ask fellow plasterers for a stake; this he did without hesitation, because when he was working he had often helped others in the same way. He could go no more go into a bakery and ask for bread than he could go into a bank and ask for money. Endowed with a strong personality, he was taking defeat philosophically. In the course of my wanderings I met hundreds of such men; they were fighting for their very lives in the face of weather hazards and a constant fear of the police, with their minds tormented by thoughts of their hungry families at home.

As we pulled into the small railroad town of Vaughn, New Mexico, we saw a carnival in full swing. This gave Dutch the bright idea that we might stage a prize fight and earn a stake. This would never have occurred to me in a million years, but with the proposition before me I accepted. We soon learned, however, that the carnival already had

its quota of fighters. Then Dutch saw a plasterer's mixing board tied to the back of an automobile and nothing would do but that we must wait for the owner to appear; a plasterer might know of some work. When he came he turned out to be one of the carnival fighters. He knew about a temporary job for Dutch, but none for me, so I left them engaged in earnest conversation about plastering and fighting. Hoboes do not part sorrowfully; they have already parted too many times with too many people. But I remember Dutch particularly because, since I was still fresh at the game, these early impressions struck deep, because he really was a fine example of a simple man, and because he and I had made a freight together when all the other 'boes' missed it.

The example of Dutch trying so tenaciously to follow his trade and getting a break at last put new heart into me and led me to make further efforts to follow mine. I had started out by dropping into newspaper offices wherever I had gone, but had long since given it up as hopeless. Invariably the newspaper men to whom I told my story had turned me down. They said that my story was n't news, but I think their real reason was that they did n't believe me. Now, however, I resolved to try my luck again. In Albuquerque I called upon the *Scripps-Howard State Tribune* and was overjoyed when they gave me a front-page three-column head on the doubleground that hoboos were interesting material and that the paper's advertisers were constantly being approached by them. The city editor called it 'a good yarn,' and to him it might just as well have been fiction. Nevertheless, I was encouraged, and I applied at many a newspaper office thereafter; but only in a few scattered cases did my fellow journalists show any interest in me.

IV

All the details of my wanderings up to this point are still indelibly fixed in my mind. The manner of life into which circumstances had thrust me was totally new; every little incident was an exciting adventure and made a lasting impression upon me. But now the novelty was beginning to wear off. I had passed my apprenticeship, I had learned the ropes, I had become a professional hobo like any other. The incidents attending the getting of food or the catching of freights, which had once made me glow with hope or fear, were now all in the day's work; I accepted them as a matter of course. The romance was gone and my mind dwelt more and more upon the hard realities of my situation. I felt more keenly the gnawings of hunger and the biting cold. The accumulated effect of endless days and nights spent in weary tramping about with insufficient food and sleep was beginning to tell upon my strength. The hopelessness of it all crushed my spirits, and my brain seemed to go sluggish and soggy. Urged onward by necessity, I kept going from place to place, weary in body and mind, meeting everywhere the same demoralization of business, until, when I reached the Pacific Coast, I had taken the full measure of the economic paralysis that held the richest nation in the world bound and prostrate.

Even now, as I look back upon it in calm retrospect, I cannot trace the exact route of my vagabondage during those last dreadful months. The days, painfully monotonous, wove themselves into a monstrous nightmare in which time, places, people, and events were merged in an endless stream of dull horrors. I have tried, in thinking back over it, to bring order out of this chaos, but I cannot. Only a few disjointed episodes remain distinct and

clear, like notes of distant chimes heard above the roar of New York's traffic.

I recall an experiment I undertook in Raton, New Mexico, a seemingly prosperous small city with a rudimentary daily newspaper. I tried to get work in every possible way of which I had ever heard. I applied at hotels, garages, churches, factories, stores, and at the office of the City Clerk and the Chamber of Commerce. I canvassed private houses for odd jobs. There was simply nothing to be had. One hotel was about to hold a convention and there were to be some temporary jobs in connection with it, but the manager would not consider anyone who did not live in Raton. At the Chamber of Commerce they informed me that if there were any work it would be given to local men, many of whom were already listed. And then, by chance, after a hungry morning, an aviator passing through town offered me the price of a meal for carrying his bag, which I did, although I had the feeling that he was merely helping me and would not have had his bag carried otherwise. This was the only job I found, although I canvassed the town with vengeful thoroughness in an effort to convince myself that nothing vital was wrong with me.

I have a vivid recollection of my arrival in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in the teeth of a May snowstorm. Along with a dozen others, I had spent a cold night riding in a box car. We had lain on the floor in that attitude peculiar to hoboes — knees curled up, the right hand between them, and the left arm crooked under the head to serve as a pillow. How I could sleep in a lumbering freight train with the weather around zero, I can't say; but that is what I seem to have done. My wardrobe consisted of a sweater, a blue shirt, a pair of trousers, socks and shoes; no hat, no underwear, and nothing really

warm except the sweater. I remember how we shivered off at Cheyenne. We made for a boiler room and slept right next to the boiler until ordered out.

I remember, later, coming into the Mojave Desert from San Bernardino. It grew hotter and hotter until the temperature reached 120 degrees. There was a road job at Bagdad, between Barstow and Needles, and I got a place working on the bridge gang. The foremen showed no pity for our suffering in the intense heat. We drank gallons of water every day, and sweated and vomited until we were weak. To avoid the sun as much as we could, we started work at four in the morning. Even at night it was too hot to sleep, and I had to give it up at the end of a week. During that one week I saw dozens of hoboes, fresh from the road, eager to try their hand. They had plenty of warning that they could not last, but work was too scarce to pass it up without a try. I saw several quit, deathly sick, while eager men, their noses up at the rumor of jobs, jumped into the vacancies. I have heard about the beggars in Italy, aggressive, dodging labor, but I have seen the American beggar fighting for his self-respect at 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Every city through which I passed in the South and West was overrun, not only with local men out of work, but with itinerants traveling through. On the whole, these itinerants were willing enough to earn their way, but since they could not they were forced to beg. Hoboes get their food in diverse ways, by asking for nickels and dimes on the main streets or 'stems,' by soliciting at private houses, by begging for food directly at bakeries and grocery stores, or by offering to work in restaurants. I often found proprietors of restaurants, large and small, so hounded by these men that they would n't even let me peel potatoes in exchange for

something to eat. Countless times when I applied at hotels for dishwashing or porter's work, an indignant manager would tell me that I looked young and husky enough to get a steady job; if I offered to explain how hard I had tried to secure just that, the manager always thought I was lying.

Over the Sierra Nevadas, in California, I saw unemployment in its most naked stage. For that is the land of milk and honey, and tales of its mild winters and its golden opportunities had drawn thousands of wanderers from other states. It is also the land of the 'bindlestiffs' — old or middle-aged men who carry their blanket rolls on their shoulders and sleep out of doors the year round. The state swarms with them. You can scarcely travel a mile along any main road in California without seeing several bindlestiffs picking up their beds and walking. The Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Imperial Valleys are infested with them. The rivers are lined with their camps. As on the Atlantic Coast, where I saw a double stream of men coming and going to and from the mythical paradise of Florida, so on the Pacific Coast I witnessed the same phenomenon. Every main-line freight has its cargo of West-bound hopefuls or East-bound cynics.

In Modesto I heard that a canning factory was to open the next morning to preserve a large shipment of peaches, the first of the season. The town was agog with the news. I was on hand at 7.30, half an hour early, but so were several thousand others, both men and women. A full crew had already been picked. The bindlestiffs were congregating about the fruit centres to rush the farms at the first sign of a ripening crop. In Fresno, the raisin town, their bedrolls were hanging by the hundreds all around the railroad station and the local water tank.

Urged blindly on, I shunted here and there along the California coast from San Diego to Eureka, in the redwood belt. I stayed a month in San Francisco and then took a trip to Seattle. Conditions, I found, were just as bad in Washington and Oregon as elsewhere. I thought of getting on board a ship, one bound for New York if possible, but many sailors were stranded 'on the beach' in every port and my chance of getting a berth was practically nil. So I came back a thousand miles to San Pedro, the harbor of Los Angeles, and slept for a week in a clean box car on a railroad siding. Laborers west of the Mississippi think nothing of traveling a thousand miles for a few weeks' work. For example, there was a rumor of new railroad operations near Klamath Falls, Oregon; on the Mexican border I talked with laborers who had heard of it and were ready to set out for Oregon at the first word that construction was actually to begin.

I remember that I got a 'workaway' on a White Flyer steamer, washing dishes from San Pedro to San Francisco. There I spent a night in jail and almost got a job as counterman in a chain restaurant. Failing this, I hitch-hiked back to Pedro, picking up a dollar in some newspaper office along the way. My nice, clean box car was still on its siding and as I crawled into it it seemed almost like coming home again. The thought released a flood of fond memories, and as I lay on the floor I took sober stock of my situation. For ten weary months that seemed ten years I had done everything that a man could do to find employment, and I had failed. I could no longer believe, as I had feared at one time, that the trouble sprang from some inadequacy of my own character or abilities. No, the fault was not mine. Mysterious forces which no one understood had paralyzed

the entire nation, and I was just one among millions of helpless victims. It was no good trying to go on. Without more ado I resolved to return to New York. Three weeks later I stepped off a moving van on the Manhattan side of the Holland Tunnel with fifty cents of the San Pedro dollar in my pocket.

The metropolitan newspapers were full of stories about unemployment. Economic articles were invading the Sunday feature sections and the literary reviews, and even the poets were singing about it. Nobody, however, seemed to know anything about the human side of unemployment. As if a conspiracy were afoot to hide the truth by subtle distortion, all the newspapers referred to the unemployed as 'the idle.' Well, maybe they were, but I doubt it. For ten months I was one of them and during that time I worked temporarily in gardens, in printing shops, in newspaper offices. I carried bricks, shoveled snow, worked on the highways, washed dishes, peeled potatoes, 'shelled' garlic, cooked 'hamburgers.' I was a packer, a checker, a tally man, a mess boy aboard ship. I mixed lime, covered doughnuts with sugar, acted as stevedore on the Seattle docks, planted corn, cucumbers, and other vegetables too numerous to mention. I helped a carpenter build an addition to a small house, scraped a motor boat, tinkered with Fords, fixed typewriters. And between whiles I was always on the move. Thus it was to be 'idle'!

For me, all this is now a bad dream from which I have waked, but for countless others it remains the grimmest of realities. And as I walk about New York in a good 'front,' with neat clothes and a clean white shirt, I can still seem to taste the peculiar flavor of mush and molasses; I can still catch the strains of the 'Prisoner's Song,' hear the pounding of locomotives, and feel the coal dust in my eyes.

THE HISTORY OF THE KING BEE

BY CHARLES D. STEWART

I

HONEYCOMB is made up of cells of two sizes, the larger being used for the raising of drones, which are male, while the others serve for the smaller and more numerous workers. These latter, though practically neuter, because of their arrested sexual development, are essentially female.

As each of these varieties of cells affords just enough room to accommodate a full-grown grub of the sex for which it is intended, it is necessary that each shall receive an egg according to its kind; and in this particular the queen makes no mistake. She lays a male egg in each of the larger cells, and a female in each of the smaller.

That an animal can have this ability to produce one sex or the other in conformity with some outer circumstance is rather hard to believe. It does not fit in with our accustomed analogies. But the fact takes place without explanation or apology; and when we patiently look into other facts in hope of explaining this one, we find, as is so often the case with science, that we have stepped into a new theatre of wonders.

A virgin queen — one that has by no possible chance become impregnated — can lay eggs and produce young quite as readily as an animal that has become a mother in the usual way. But her eggs will produce only the drones, or males. The virgin queen will have all sons and no daughters. But after she has met the male, in what is known as

her 'wedding flight,' she can lay eggs of either kind.

From this it becomes evident that the male eggs laid by a queen after she has been fertilized are eggs untouched by the father's substance, being the same that she laid when she was a virgin. It is only for the production of daughters that the male help is necessary. And the female eggs which she lays are the same as the others except that she has brought them into contact with a supply of the male principle. She holds in her body a lifetime supply of the sperm acquired in her wedding flight, and she can apply it or withhold it according as circumstances require. That this is the truth of the matter has long ceased to be a matter of doubt. The modern microscope has enabled investigators to arrive at the inner facts, looking closely at queen bees and their eggs under the various conditions.

There has been much speculation as to whether a queen discriminates between the large cells and the small by an act that is mental or by some influence that is purely physical. Does she do it by particular observation and an act of will, or are we rather to conclude that the different widths of the cells act upon her muscles in such a way as to fertilize the egg in one case and in the other leave it untouched? Is the queen using intelligence or is she a mere automaton? This is a point which remains a mystery.

For a long time after the facts had been determined, any such statement of the powers of the queen bee was re-

ceived with skepticism not only among practical beekeepers but among scientists who had had other theories. That a queen bee could receive from the male a store of sperm sufficient to last her throughout the four or five years of her life, and that she could fertilize hundreds of thousands of eggs and so make them female, and withhold the sperm from others, which would in consequence be male, was considered ridiculous — preposterous. It was another of those far-fetched scientific theories.

That the large cells *do* produce male bees while the smaller ones bring forth female is a fact beyond question; and practical beekeepers, having an everyday familiarity with the circumstances, naturally formed opinions as to how the sex was controlled. And their theory was that it was simply a matter of feeding. The queen, they thought, laid eggs that had no particular leanings in the matter of sex, their original state being neither male nor female; and then, after the eggs had hatched, the nurse bees, by some difference in the food which they carried to the two kinds of cells, caused the little worm in a large cell to grow up as a male and that in a small cell to become a female. If this seems too much to expect of mere victuals, we must remember that the practical beekeeper arrived at this way of reasoning by noting how a queen bee is made; and here we see doings almost as outlandish.

II

A queen bee, or perfect female, although she differs from a worker bee in size, shape, function, and a whole set of instincts, is hatched from the same sort of egg as the worker. The difference is wholly due to feeding. Nurse bees will take any one of the recently hatched larvæ in the small cells, and simply by giving it a different diet and a little more room will cause it to become a

queen bee instead of a worker. In fact, any beekeeper can make this change; and among those who raise queen bees for the market it is a matter of everyday practice. The operation consists in transferring one of the young larvæ from one of the small cells into a very large one, a queen cell, which the beekeeper makes artificially; whereupon the nurse bees take note of the change and bring up the little worm as a queen. This explains to us how the practical bee man got his theory that sex was the result of feeding. If food can make certain physical transformation, why cannot it determine those bodily details upon which sex depends? The thing the bee man was already familiar with was enough of a miracle; and by making one miracle cover both cases he felt better satisfied. This was an interesting point in human nature, but it was bad natural history. Laboratory workers absolutely proved the other theory to be right; the queen does determine the sex at the time she lays the egg, even though science cannot tell whether she does it willfully or not. And so the result of scientific progress was to make two miracles grow where only one grew before.

On each of the hind legs of the worker bee is a brush for gathering pollen, and a basket-shaped arrangement for carrying it home. On the legs of the queen bee these tools are lacking. On the abdomen of the worker bee are pockets which extrude the plates of building wax, and on either side of the head is a coiled, intracellular gland which is supposed to be the source of the nitrogenous food which is fed to the young. The queen has neither of these devices. The worker is able to reach into the nectar-bearing chalices of flowers and gather honey, while the queen, with a shorter jaw, can do no such work. The queen is sexually complete, while the workers have but the rudiments of their

sex; and along with this egg-laying power of the queen comes an entirely different set of instincts. While the workers are free to go forth and explore the world of flowers, the queen remains a recluse in the hive. A queen is longer and more tapering than a worker, and her wings fall far short, when folded, of reaching the end of her body.

But it is in the mechanism of the sting that we find the most surprising contrast. The worker bee has a straight sting which is a marvel of tool designing. It consists of two barbed spears which fit against one another inside a sheath and are worked by a muscle of their own. They operate by a pumping movement, the spears thrusting forward alternately and thus taking a deeper and deeper hold on the flesh while formic acid flows into the wound from a poison sac. In this way the sting may go on doing its work quite independent of the bee. The sting of a worker bee takes such strong hold that it usually resists the bee's best efforts to extract it, and when it pulls out of the bee's body it is likely to bring a part of the intestine with it. In consequence of this loss the bee dies. A queen bee, on the other hand, has a sting that is curved like a scimitar and is easily removed from the wound. It is never lost and may be used repeatedly. But, though she has this formidable-looking weapon, a queen may be handled without fear. The sole function of her weapon is to kill rival queens. She is not a defender of the hive, and so she lacks entirely the instinct of stinging.

In these instances we see two creatures with quite different tool equipment—a fitting of the means to the end as by an intellectual response to what is needed. Yet it is all due to the giving to one of a richer food than to the other. The same egg that produced the worker would have produced the queen provided the little worm had

been given a more liberal supply of the nitrogenous element gathered from the flowers. And yet the same egg, naturally a male, would have produced a drone had not the touch of fertilizing sperm transformed the male into the female. It is all quite incredible, but yet a fact. It is easy to conceive of food being seized upon by the life forces and used as building material or as fuel, but how can it be the guiding factor in determining a machine design? We naturally think of an ingenious tool as being an invention, a product of thought; and then when we look upon the queen's curved scimitar and compare it with the sting of the worker we wonder whether it is proper to ask the question, How much does nitrogen know? In what secret recesses of the elements, in what ultimate interstices of carbon and hydrogen and nitrogen does the mystery of life hide itself? Certainly this seems to be a great deal for mere victuals to do! It is simply a fact.

When a queen is five or six days out of the cell in which she was hatched, and is about to become the active head of the hive, she takes what is known as the 'wedding flight,' high in air. It is the only time in her life that she leaves the hive without the swarm. In this high, swift flight she is pursued by drone bees, the strongest flier among the number finally catching her; and when she has been impregnated she turns back toward the hive, while the male, having done her a lifetime service, drops dead in mid-air. And though a queen usually lives and remains active until sometime in her fourth year, and though she can, at the height of the season, lay more than three thousand eggs a day, she is able to touch each egg that she drops in a worker cell with its own small share of the dead father's substance! She is now practically both male and female, both married and un-

married, the virgin nature giving life to sons, and the male principle, which she holds in store, giving the magic touch which turns a passing egg from male to female.

This most important bee of the swarm, easily distinguished by her general appearance, is constantly engaged, during the honey season, in laying eggs. As she goes round and round over the surface of the comb, she is accompanied by special attendants, often likened to a royal escort, whose duty it is to feed her. There may be fifty or sixty thousand brood cells in the hive which need to be gone over once in twenty-one days, that being the time it takes for an egg to develop into a bee and leave the cell vacant; and such constant production of eggs would be impossible without a constant supply of food. When she comes to the mouth of an empty cell she thrusts her head into it as if to satisfy herself that it is in proper condition; and then she bends her body and deposits an egg in the bottom. And this routine she keeps up with the monotonous regularity of a weaver throwing his shuttle, or a woman taking stitches in a taboret.

As a farmer must make hay while the sun shines, so the bee must do the year's work while the flowers are in bloom. If there is not a great multitude of these short-lived workers in May and June, there will not be enough honey to carry the clustered swarm through the dark months of winter; and besides, there must be a surplus of children in order that migrating swarms may go out and increase the number of colonies in the world. This is fundamental in the economy of nature. The trees in the orchard, like the clover in the field and the vegetables in the garden, have got to be impregnated in order that they may bear; for male and female created He them. As man lives largely upon the young of others, — grain, nuts,

fruit, and eggs, — and even the meat which seems to make him independent of the plant is itself the product of grain, it is most important to him that the winged commerce be carried on. Summer's mission has not begun until by some device there has been a meeting between the plants; and so much of this work devolves upon the bee that it may be said not to live for itself at all, but fundamentally for plants. And ultimately for man. Not even a pickle can get on the table except by the intervention of the queen's offspring. The pickle, as sour as it may have become, has had to provide a drop of honey as bounty to its bee.

A bee's egg, hardly visible at the bottom of the cell, hatches in three or four days and becomes a small white worm. The nurse bees feed the little worm on a milky jelly specially secreted, and after three days of this food they change the diet to a half-digested mixture of honey and pollen. The result of such care is that the little white worm is soon a big, fat grub entirely filling its allotted quarters in the comb; whereupon the nurse bees seal it over with a porous, convex lid, and leave it to undergo the miracle of becoming a bee. In about twenty-one days from the time the egg was laid, the new bee gnaws its way through the lid and steps forth, somewhat pale and delicate-looking, but all complete. It is now ready to begin a career of steady loafing, if it is a drone, or, if it is of the other variety, to start to work at once and lend a hand in the raising of more bees. But if it is to be a queen bee, the feeding of the royal jelly is kept up, instead of being stopped at the end of three days, and the queen is complete in about sixteen days instead of twenty-one.

III

From this general view of the state of marriage in the hive (the whole com-

plexity of which I have tried to convey in the shortest possible form) the reader will now readily understand why it was that up to quite recent times, and despite the fact that the human race had been paying attention to the bee from the earliest ages, not one fact was ever discovered regarding the sex of bees. And yet the mysteries of bee life were a continual source of speculation. Virgil, who was born on the fifteenth day of October of the year 70 B.C., and whose two thousandth birthday was recently a live topic in the newspapers, reflected the whole biological knowledge of his day when he represented the bees as having no sex at all. The young, it was then thought, were somehow generated from the inner material of flowers. He says: —

Nor shall the bees the less thy wonder move,
That none indulge the joys of mutual love;
None waste their strength by amorous toils
subdued,
No pangs of labour renovate the brood.
By instinct led, at springtide's genial hour
They gather all the race from herb and flower;
Hence springs the people, hence th' imperial lord,
Their domes and waxen kingdoms rise restored.

Here we observe, instead of complete ignorance, a certain knowledge of the bee. Somehow the ancients had learned that there is no sexual intercourse in the hive — and how they learned that in a day when the observation hive had not been invented is more than I can imagine. And this belief, even upon the strongest circumstantial evidence, might have been difficult were it not that the age accepted without question the doctrine of spontaneous generation.

From Virgil we learn that man could himself cause nature to bring forth bees in case the hives became weak in population. All that was necessary was to kill a fine young bull and allow it to decay under a shed. The ancient Greeks believed that, as flies spring by spontaneous generation from rotting

meat, so the bee, which goes through the maggot form, could be had from the special carcass of a young bull. In the fourth book of the *Georgics*, which is devoted wholly to beekeeping, we have a full account of this method of replenishing the swarms, and how it was revealed to the human race from the lips of Proteus. It has been said that the fourth book of the *Georgics* is the greatest book on bees ever written; but when we consider that exactly one half of it is taken up with this matter of creating bees from bulls, and that the actual information in the other half might easily be written on one page, this opinion would hardly seem to come from one who had taken the trouble to read the *Georgics*. It is a supreme achievement in poetry, but hardly to be recommended to one who is looking for information about the bee.

Virgil's knowledge of the bee was essentially the same as that of Aristotle, who wrote three hundred years before him, and about the same as that of Tusser, who wrote during the time of Shakespeare. All this while the human mind had before it the familiar problem of the bee — the mystery of its sex and the inscrutable way in which it produced its young. And this is to say nothing of all the sugarless centuries before Aristotle, during which the bees were as much a matter of concern to the Oriental husbandman as were his oxen or his sheep.

To all these men and the people of their times, that principal bee of the swarm, catching the eye by its distinctive size and shape, was known as the King Bee. And here a question asks itself: If they knew nothing whatever of the sex of bees, how could they agree so unanimously, and so long, that this one was a male? This question, asking itself, answers itself quite as easily. This bee was the most important bee in the

hive; hence it must be of the masculine kind. It had influence and a large following; hence it was ordained by nature to be a monarch. And if this sort of reasoning does not fall in with the spirit of the present generation of thinkers, we must make allowance for quite recent developments in history. The sex of this bee was settled on grounds not of nature but of human nature.

The bee has always been used to point a moral. In the respect that it is industrious it has served as an example for the people; and in the respect that the bee is an obedient citizen and a loyal soldier it has been held up as the pattern of orderly government. The word 'royal' recurs often in all bee literature, the monarch being fed on royal jelly and attended by the royal escort; and so it was only natural that actual kings and queens looked upon the bee as giving countenance to their own human status. The hive became the prototype of royal sway. And while the kings were using the bee as the symbol of their craft, — the House of Valois making conquest in garments embroidered with aureate bees, and bearing the assuring motto, 'The king bee has no sting,' and even Napoleon adopting the golden bee as if it were Nature's stamp and seal attesting the validity of his form of government, — the supposed kings in the beehives of the world were going their perpetual rounds from empty cell to empty cell and doing their best to keep up with their task of laying eggs.

IV

From the very first, the bee has been not merely an insect, but a point of view. But times change. And one of the ways in which we of the modern age differ from Aristotle and Virgil and Shakespeare is that we no longer be-

lieve in a king bee. When the swarm is alluded to by the modern mind it is always in the terms of democracy. The bee, we are told, is 'a highly socialized insect.' The swarm illustrates the working out of human interests and is a model of coöperation. We no longer say of the bees, with Shakespeare, that 'they have a king and officers of sorts,' nor do we agree with his Archbishop of Canterbury that the order and obedience there exhibited are Nature's pattern for princes and their subjects. We are more likely to be informed that in a bee community the children are the property of the state, and cared for in common. Thus the bee, but yesterday a Royalist, is well on its way to becoming a Communist. For these are the days of the twilight of the kings. Inside the hive as well as out, it is the Ragnarok of royalty.

The world is full of meanings, of established symbols and ready-made points of view. We are born into a secondhand universe, a world that has been too much used by others. Language itself is but the labels that have been pasted on things by poets, preachers, and propagandists, and by the time we arrive on the scene we are expected to see it through 'the spectacles of books.'

Now the plain truth regarding bees is that the principal bee of the swarm is neither a king nor a queen nor the head of a 'community'; neither democratic, aristocratic, nor socialist. She is simply the mother of the whole lot. Whether there be forty or fifty or sixty thousand of them, they are all her children. The daughters all remain at home and are brought up as spinsters so that they may tend to the work of bringing up the young. If a beehive is to be given any sort of poetic twist, we must say that it is a monument to the sacredness of the family.

If a gold-banded Italian queen be put

into a colony of German or black bees, in place of their own queen, it will be but thirty-five days before the whole swarm will consist of pure-bred Italian bees and there will not be a black bee left. The reason will be, of course, that the fertilized Italian queen lays eggs that are purely the product of herself and the Italian drone which she met on her wedding flight. The black bees will simply be engaged in bringing up her brood. And if a black or German queen, fertilized by a black drone, be put into a swarm of Italians, the swarm will all be black in the same length of time. It was by such experiments and observations that we have been able to determine the maximum length of life of a bee during the working season.

When we consider that the cells of brood comb have eggs in them and that this principal bee of the hive is so constantly engaged in putting them there, we naturally wonder how the beekeepers of the past could all mistake her for a male. We must remember that the hive — whether artificially made of cork or straw or tile or mud, or whether established by the bees themselves in the hollow of a tree — was naturally a place of inner darkness. And if the swarm settled somewhat in the open, as in the cleft of a rock, it would hardly be a place in which the curious-minded observer would care to tarry. To get the honey, the ancient beekeeper had first to destroy the bees. The invention of the observation hive, banishing the darkness in which the bee had usually dwelt, and the perfecting of the modern microscope, spying into spermathecae and making manifest the infinitely little, discovered in a few years what the ages had been unable to come at.

In the course of time, and before science had become fully equipped to determine the facts, it became rumored that this principal bee was not a king at

all, but a member of the other sex. Swammerdam (1637–1680) first ascertained the sex of bees, by dissection; but credit for first publishing the theory should go to an English beekeeper named Butler, who in 1609 published his *Feminine Monarchy*. It was a novelty of literature which did not attract much attention.

This was at a time when cane sugar was beginning to be plentiful in Europe, and honey, which had heretofore been one of the prime necessities of life, was becoming less important. The four books of Virgil's *Georgics* reflect the story of the bee up to this time. They are poetical treatises on the four branches of husbandry — agriculture, arboriculture, cattle raising, and beekeeping; and the fact that the bee is given the same amount of attention as the other subjects attests the great importance of this insect in an age that knew nothing of cane syrup or sugar. Even in Virgil's time rumors had reached Europe of a 'reed honey' made from a plant that grew in India, but as yet the beehive constituted the sugar factory of the world. And when examples of the cane product came to Europe during the Middle Ages, it was in small quantities that were regarded with curiosity and handled as a drug.

As long as Europe knew so little of sugar cane, and in any case had no district that was suited to its growth, the peoples of the Occident, both pagan and Christian, were mainly dependent upon the bee for their sweetening. A New World had to be discovered; and then the sugar cane, specimens of which had been brought to Spain by the Moors, had to prove its adaptability to the West Indies before Europe could begin to have a plentiful supply of sugar.

In Shakespeare's day, while sugar had ceased to be a drug and a curiosity, and confections were freely made by

people who were not apothecaries, the bee still held a place of importance in the world. The great dramatist had evidently never heard of the theory that the principal bee was a female, as propounded in the obscure book brought out in his latter years. His plays show his belief in all the traditions of the king bee. From Virgil to Shakespeare was a stretch of some sixteen hundred years, and in all that time scientists had advanced but little in their knowledge of the hive. The people ate their honey unflavored with the truth. In retrospect, it seems a pity that the modern style of scientific and carefully measured hive, increasing the output of the swarm many times over, had not been invented when the world most needed it. A thousand years ago it would have made its inventor immortal. Two thousand years ago Virgil would have written his name among the gods.

V

Few people, even among those who read bee books with the most practical purposes in mind, get such a final grasp of the nature of the swarm as to have what I should call a bee's point of view. One day in the summer of 1919 I had an experience with a swarm of bees which made plain to me more than anything else possibly could the ultimate nature of a swarm of bees.

It was on the twelfth day of July, 1919, that I heard the oncoming of a swarm of bees, and saw them arrive and settle on a little slope of false roofing at the corner of my house. The wooden cornice beneath the low eaves continues horizontally for a little distance after it turns the corner of the stone wall, giving a purely decorative touch to each of these corners on the gable end; and this little useless piece of cornice is roofed with a small area of shingle work. It was an ideal landing place for a swarm

of bees that had arrived at what they now considered their new home. This was a triangular tunnel or vacant space under the roof which was left after we had partitioned off some upstairs bedrooms; and into this cavity in the architecture they began to disappear through a crack in the cornice. The directness with which they found their way to my house and into this crack was enough to convince any logical mind — which some nature writers do not seem to have — that bees have scouts who have taken observation of suitable places beforehand.

Pretty soon the interesting event at my house had drawn a small audience, my wife deploring that there would be a mess of honey under a part of the roof where it was inaccessible, and that we should have a swarm of bees for many years where we did not want them. She had learned enough about bees to know that a bee's home is a permanent institution. It remains year after year, no matter how many swarms of older bees migrate from it as the seasons pass.

And then I made a stroke of prophecy. It was a very hot day. Leaning on my hoe, with which I had been touching up the garden, I said I did not believe that the bees would stay there. They would find it so hot in that enclosed space that their comb would melt. And this would cause them to move.

I had myself been up under that roof, in another part, on such a day as this; and I did not believe that the bees would approve of the temperature. And even while we were talking it over the bees began to pour out through the crack and gather en masse on the little slope of shingles. And when they had all come forth they took wing and settled on a small plum tree, from a low branch of which they suspended themselves in a big clump. I was somewhat surprised by this immediate fulfilling

of my prediction. I had only meant that they would ultimately desert the location, and this by way of consoling my wife. But it was a wonderful piece of prophecy, and it made a due impression on the neighbors.

As I had no bees of my own, but satisfied my whilom curiosity by studying those of a neighbor who had seventy colonies, I decided that they ought to belong to him; and so I telephoned him that I would make him a present of thirty or forty thousand bees provided he would send over a hive properly outfitted with empty comb to tempt them in. About four o'clock in the afternoon there came along a farm boy, barefoot and scantily attired, and wheeling a heavy wheelbarrow on which was the prepared hive. So now I got ready to hive them; and having spread a bed sheet on the grass, and placed the hive in position, I gave the little plum tree a vigorous jolt and saw the big, live clump fall and sort of melt out softly on the sheet. And almost without hesitation the great population, 'almost a cityful,' began to flow hiveward.

This flowing of a big swarm toward and into the low entrance of a hive is a spectacle well worth an effort at description if one had the space. As the bees are used to hanging in clumps and walking all over one another, they go along two and three layers deep; they are their own moving sidewalk. And, so going, they give an excellent demonstration of that philosophic concept which the public is now trying so hard to get a grasp of — relative and positive motion. While the top layer of bees is moving at a slow rate of speed relative to the layer of bees on which it is walking, it is making great positive speed toward the entrance of the hive. It is this effortless sliding along that gives the crowd such a mobile and liquidlike sort of flow. What is known as the Wis-

consin type of hive has a little porch with an overhanging roof on the gable end, like the original Langstroth hive; and I have wondered whether Langstroth, who was a preacher, was influenced by his lifelong calling to make the first hive so much like a little white church. However this may be, a church is what such a hive looks like; and then it seems a great white temple, capable of holding an inconceivable throng, as you stoop down close and keep watching these thousands and thousands of communicants making their way in.

When the last bee had entered, I closed up the opening with a block, lifted the load on the wheelbarrow, and sent the farm boy struggling manfully homeward. This, I supposed, was the end of a pleasing summer-day incident. And so I turned my attention to the garden again.

In an hour or so, as the shadows were beginning to reach out in the direction of night, I gave over my work in the garden and went up the path past the corner of the house; and there on the plum tree, hanging from the selfsame limb and clinging partly to the trunk, as before, was that very swarm of bees again. For a swarm of bees to leave a furnished hive which they had voluntarily entered and come back to continue some allegiance to a particular limb of a tree was impossible. But there they were. It was like a magician's trick — an object is put in a box and sealed securely, and then it defies all law and appears right under your nose.

While my jaw was still hanging open with astonishment, I perceived what had taken place. The bees that I sent away had been hanging on the tree several hours. These that I saw now were a part of the swarm that had separated one by one and gone afield for some reason. They were off for-

aging or house hunting. While they were thus absent I had hived the others and sent them away. And now the wanderers had returned as the sun declined; and here they were, looking just like the ones I had sent away. Calculating five thousand bees to the quart, there must have been fifteen thousand now on the tree.

Their whole adventure, so far, seemed to have been as follows. A swarm of bees had been led by their scouts to a bad location. The scouts must have found the place on some cooler day than this, when its comb-melting qualities would not be evident. Finding it a mistake, they had settled on the little plum tree pending the choice of another location. Bees have got to stay together. They can do nothing alone, and any that wander away must come back to the rest of the swarm. And so this present detachment, having wandered away, had come back to join the rest; and in spite of the fact that the others had gone they settled and stayed here. They did this solely because it was headquarters. It was the bees' home office or temporary address until they could find a permanent location and all depart together; and to come back to it was according to bee rules. Anyway, this was how I added up their moves and mishaps — correctly, so far as I know — while I stood there thinking them over.

And now I naturally wondered what these bees would do. Would they find a suitable home and move into it, or would they return to the old home from which they had migrated? On the following morning I should probably find them gone; and this would be all I should ever know of them.

But next morning they were still there. And on the morning following they were still there. To come to the point at once, they stayed on my tree permanently, coming and going in-

dividually, but hanging in a clump — or rather they stayed as permanently as bees can stay, considering the length of a bee's life. They dwindled gradually as time passed; and finally the last bee of all lost his hold and fell off, or failed to come back at night. And this was on the first day of September. Altogether they were with me seven weeks — fifty days, to be exact; and in that time I had ample opportunity to look them over, show them to visitors, and note their conduct under the new conditions.

VI

Of course it did not take me longer than a day to discover the one great thing that had happened to them. The queen was gone. She was with the contingent I had sent away. And this part of the swarm, being queenless, would do nothing. More strictly stated, they *could* do nothing, for there was nothing for them to do. Bees, in all their multiform activities in the hive, are engaged in raising young. And with no queen laying eggs there are no young to hatch. Therefore, why should they waste their efforts in building cells, bringing home nectar and pollen, and doing all those things that we see done around a hive?

At this juncture in our narrative it might seem in order to enlarge upon the dolefulness of their plight. We might regard them as a dead swarm, a clump of naturally busy bees with all their instincts frustrated and no object left in life. Certainly they were there till the hand of death should claim them; and it would be easy to write in eloquent terms about the tragedy of a queenless swarm.

But it is better to stick to facts. Those bees lived longer than they would have lived had they found a home and kept on working as they do at the height of the season. They came

and went from this hiveless and combless cluster and fared quite as well as they would have done in a hive. Bees live on the nectar which they sip from flowers, carrying the surplus home in their honey bags for the feeding of others; and these bees of mine were in no want. They did not starve to death. Rain fell on the cluster repeatedly, and several times the wind was high; but this did not seem to have any ill effect on them. They hung there in their rounded formation, and certainly the most of them remained dry in spite of any storm. Those on the outside could enter the cluster if they wished, while the wings of others would shingle the outer surface. And in fair weather they were free to go in search of flowers and live their natural life in the field.

When we think of bees in accordance with figures of speech we say that the bee lays up stores for itself in winter and thus shows foresight. But as the extreme length of a bee's life in the working season is thirty-five days it is quite apparent that none of these busy workers of the flowery months ever live to enjoy a drop of the honey that is stored. They are working entirely for posterity. A bee in summer does not absolutely need a comb to cling to or cells to contain honey or pollen. Those cells are cradles and incubators for the young that are being raised, and they are sealed storage space for supplies that will serve to carry later generations over the winter. So far as the individual bees are concerned, any swarm could hang on a tree and do quite well. Certainly these bees of mine lived more than the usual life of the hard worker.

When I say that they dwindled till there were but a few that could be easily counted, and that these dwindled till there was but one living on the accustomed spot, I am speaking in exact terms. A few days before the end I

went out to make my usual inspection toward evening and there were six bees surviving. But there they were at the usual headquarters, as much a swarm of bees as if there had been forty thousand of them. On the last day of August there was but one bee. It was spending the night on a place on the bark where a little wax had been deposited and a single cell built up to the height of about a sixteenth of an inch. And on the first of September that bee was not to be seen. The last one or two of the swarm had lived forty-nine to fifty days after the time when they arrived at my home.

During the time that I had this swarm on hand I found that people generally are much surprised to find that bees can subsist quite well apart from a comb and a sheltered hive and without doing any of the usual work of a bee. Many visitors were brought to see what I had done with a swarm of bees; and I was expected to explain the hows and whys of my seemingly domesticated colony. From considerable experience in delivering myself of bee philosophy I came to be of the opinion that a swarm in this condition would be the ideal object lesson for lecturing purposes. I do not know, however, how anyone could plan beforehand to intercept a swarm of bees in their flight from one home to another and then manage to rob them of their queen.

Bees in a clump hang loosely, so that those inside can come to the surface at will, and this they are always doing. Thus, while the clump keeps its entity, the individual bees are always flying abroad and returning and changing places with others. On a warm day there was always an aura of bees hovering about the surface as they came and went. The swarm was by no means dead or disheartened. They did not build comb, because that is a part of raising young, and in the absence of a

queen there was no such work to do. As for their disposition to sting, I could put my face quite close to the cluster and watch them at leisure. Around a hive one is likely to be stung when he stands in the line of flight — that is, when he is interfering with the work. In such a clump as this the bees seemed to be quite tolerant of company.

A general point of view is that a bee stings in self-defense. But a bee usually dies as the result of the loss of its sting,

and what sort of self-defense is it that so surely ends in death? Here again we see that bees live and die in the support and defense of the hive, and not of themselves. What a bee lives for would be hard to say, looking at the thing from an individual and selfish standpoint. Like the rest of animated nature, vegetable as well as animal, bees are engaged in the work of propagation. And they seem to be wholly and heartily taken up with the work.

RUSHING THE CHEROKEE STRIP

BY SETH K. HUMPHREY

I

WITH the passing of the frontier, pioneering degenerated into mad scrambles for lands taken from the various Indian reservations. But after the experiences at the opening of the Cherokee Strip, in September 1893, the government had to put an end to these land rushes en masse at a given signal. Giving away reservation plums at a tenth of their value incited to murder; and murder, as a means of deciding who should win the prizes, fell into disrepute. Thereupon the government went into the lottery business, raffling off subsequent offerings of Indians' lands by the drawing of numbers in envelopes from a big box.

The Cherokee Strip — more correctly, the Cherokee Outlet — was a stretch of prairie country about sixty miles wide, extending for two hundred miles along the north line of the Indian Territory. North of it was Kansas; south, the four-year-old Territory of

Oklahoma. Its great extent, and its location next to settled country, drew the biggest crowd of adventurers ever gathered for the single purpose of collecting a farm from the government. There were also a few farmers present.

I went over from Nebraska to join the excitement. And of all the land booms this last of its kind was the wildest, most tragic, and most ridiculous.

The Cherokees were originally a powerful Indian nation in Georgia. Successive treaties had cut their lands to what they considered an irreducible minimum. They might have hung to this minimum for some time had not gold been found on their reservation; this shortened the story of the Cherokees in Georgia with a bang. They were ejected by a strong military force and led seven hundred miles through the wilds to the Indian Territory. Four thousand out of fourteen thousand died on the way.

Horrible? No worse, this exile of the

Cherokees, than that of some other Indian tribes to 'the Dump,' except that there were more of the Cherokees to make a showing in the death total.

From their reservation in the Indian Territory, the Cherokees were granted a 'perpetual outlet west' to the great buffalo plains running up the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. Hence the name for this long tract, 'the Cherokee Outlet.' Successive treaties, again, had cut down their holdings in the Indian Territory. The last to go was this Outlet; now it was to be rushed for on the crack of a gun at twelve o'clock noon, Saturday, September 16, 1893.

The rush was to be made from a line-up on both the Kansas and the Oklahoma boundaries. I chose the Kansas State line, since two of my brothers, land men like myself, were living within twenty miles of the Cherokee border. At this point a railroad crossed the Strip, running southward to Oklahoma and Texas. My older brother and I, being landowners and therefore ineligible as homesteaders, were to make the run solely for the fun of it; and, to get an extra kick out of the experience, we were going in on bicycles. I might anticipate by saying that we added novelty to the spectacle. Every other conveyance then known to man was in that race, but no bicycles except ours.

A week before the opening, we were exercising our steel bronchos along the Cherokee border. Thousands of boomers were already there, but arrivals just before twelve o'clock on the chosen Saturday would have the same chance in the rush. Yet most of these had been squatting here for a month or more — members of that vast fraternity who spend a good part of their lives aimlessly waiting for something to turn up. A prairie-schooner crowd, largely,

camped next to their tented wagons with their pots and pans and open fires, wherever space offered along the edges of the Kansas farms.

Did the farm owners object? Not many, if any. They were having a brisk local market for all their produce, from pigs and chickens to corn and oats. Objection might not have been effective anyway, with the southern borders of their farms virtually appropriated by the motley crowd waiting for the big run.

It was a hundred in the shade, with no shade, and the south wind everlastingly blowing during the day, bowling the heat along on a steady run from Texas to Canada, burning every green thing on the way.

North of the boomers were the cultivated farms and tree-sheltered homes of Kansas. At their feet was the promised land of untouched prairie; not a tree, not a building, nothing but the dried grass of a dry September, stretching as far south and east and west as they could see. Rich land, waiting for them at a dollar and a half per acre, and worth twenty — but they were not to enter until the crack of the soldiers' rifles out front gave them the signal to go.

The new country had been surveyed in the usual way: four little holes at mile corners, with a small mound between them bearing the notched stone from which the land numbers could be read by those who knew how to do it. There were the half-mile marks, too, pointing east-west, or north-south, to send the boomer on the run to his mile corner, where he was supposed to stake a little flag marked with his name and land number, to notify all comers that that quarter section had been taken.

This is the procedure: at the signal gun, Mr. Boomer starts on the fly — on a wise little prairie mustang if he has good sense, or anything else from

a race horse to a prairie schooner if he has n't — and keeps going until he thinks he is well clear of all others still running; then he and his partner — they should run in pairs, to witness each other's time of staking claim — veer away from each other about a half mile, so as not to stake the same quarter section, jump off their conveyances, stick their flags, and note the time. The marking at the mile corner is then to be done as soon as possible; but that first setting up of the flag is the legal time of entry.

A pretty plan, neatly worked out in advance on paper; but in the confusion of a wild race partners cannot always stick together, and several others may be staking the same claims just over the brows of as many little hills.

II

Days before the run, matters began to look ominous. Already there were twice as many waiting boomers as waiting farms — and heaven knew what the proportion would be on the day of the rush. The idea was penetrating the deluded crowd that this was to be a *race* — not a prairie-schooner parade to a happy new home. Moreover, four sections in each township of thirty-six — one claim in every nine — were reserved for educational and state purposes. Thus one man out of every nine who might succeed in staking a claim ahead of the crowd was bound to find himself on reserved land. By the time he could look up his land numbers at the mile corner, his chance of going on and getting another claim would be nil.

With a faint comprehending of the difficulties, there came the temptation to sneak into the Strip at night ahead of the run, choose a good piece of land, hide on it, and be there with the proper markings when the boomers came

tearing along. In the confusion, one could quietly emerge from long grass, or a hole in the ground, with not much chance of getting caught at the trick.

It looked easy, and it was easy. Under cover of darkness, more and more were slipping across the line. These too-previous gentry were known as 'sooners.' The soldier patrol was supposed to put them out; but the usual penalty for sooners caught in the act by boomers after the opening was sudden death.

The patrolling of the Strip by soldiers was totally inadequate. So the bright minds in Washington who were engineering the project from afar got up a scheme for beating the sooners. Everybody must register before the run, said they, and have a sealed certificate with his signature attached, to make his claim good when he came to prove up at the Land Office. Notaries were posted all along the line delivering the certificates; everybody lined up and got one. The poor fellows already in had none. It was a clever turn — on those already in the Strip; but during those last few nights sooners, twenty now to one before, flocked across the border, armed with the certificates. Anybody versed even a little bit in the ways of the Western land boomer would have withheld these tokens until the morning of the run.

But every new complication added to the excitement, and this one boomed business for the soldier patrol. Many a soldier, on discovering a hidden sooner, found himself susceptible to the touch of a ten-dollar bill; then he would inform a comrade in arms, who also would drop around on the hiding man; and so on, between friends, until the sooner's money was exhausted. The last soldier, getting nothing, would virtuously escort the depleted sooner out to his officer on the border,

and receive credit for the act — not much as compared to a 'ten spot,' but better than nothing at all.

Meanwhile, the crowd on the border grew — and it grew distinctly tougher. The very notion of standing on land worth thirty dollars an acre, with one's toes touching land to be handed over to the quickest man at one-fifty per acre, was tempting to men of the quick kind. We were now getting men in decided contrast to the inarticulate, prairie-schooner crowd; men ranging all the way from mounted gun toters off the ranges to city sports with fast horses hitched to buckboards. Most of the fancy horses were to fail. It takes a prairie-bred horse to dodge badger holes and gopher mounds and hit the bunch grass with a sure foot.

Speed, anyway, was only a single item in this peculiar race; the consistent winners were to be men off the ranges with good mounts and plenty of gun bluff to clear off those who had arrived ahead of them. The race might be to the swift, but the land was going to the tough.

III

Finally the eventful morning broke. A day exactly like all the rest — hot, dry, a south wind rising with the sun. Dead ahead, a hot prairie wilderness where there was not a well, scarcely a stream not gone to a dry bed, and but an occasional water tank on the one railroad running south to Texas. This water would be available only for the comparatively few who could stake their claims near by.

Naturally there was a wild eagerness to make the run next to this railroad; not only because of its water tanks in a waterless country, but to get land near it, and also for a chance at the town lots in the several sites which had been laid out near the tank stations.

A boomer could take a farm or a town lot — but not both.

So at this point in the waiting line we had an immense number of 'town sitters' added to the land seekers. For their special accommodation a train of ten cattle cars was to be run, stopping for a moment at each town site. Its engine toed the starting line along with all the rest of us, with steam up and loaded to the cowcatcher with a human swarm, waiting for the crack of the gun at twelve o'clock noon.

The train was to run not faster than eight miles an hour, so as to give no advantage over the horsemen; but a flock of one-dollar bills fluttering around the engine warped the trainmen's judgment, and they ran it fifteen. Another fight provoker, this, in the already hectic scrap for land.

As we walked down to the starting line that morning, coatless, of course, and pushing our bicycles, — there was too much of a crowd to ride, — I happened to be just ahead of my brother and a deputy sheriff, a friend of his. The deputy was telling of the valiant but futile efforts to disarm the boomers while they were in the law-abiding State of Kansas, and thus cut down the inevitable shooting in the Strip. Only a few hundred guns had been collected, he said.

'Probably,' he remarked sadly, 'there are guns on most of the men all around us.'

Suddenly I happened to think that the barrel of my good old Smith and Wesson hammerless was at that moment sticking out at least an inch and a half from my hip pocket. I was carrying five hundred dollars cash in a money belt, to be ready for any possible business turn in the Strip, and I felt the need of protection. Without undue haste, but quite soon, I slipped around behind that deputy sheriff.

Equipment for the run had to include water as the first essential; then food for several days — or for a day only, if one were going to a town site — and a blanket to roll up in on the prairie at night. Those with wheeled vehicles could be more generous in carrying oats, but neither they nor the horseback riders could hope to run the race if carrying any water at all for their horses. In any event, the horses took a long chance for their lives in this merry race.

This crowd of the final morning was as like the pastoral collection of a week before as a political convention is like a Sunday-school picnic. If, a week before, there had been two boomers to every claim, twenty had gathered now. A simple calculation showed that south of every mile of line there were a hundred and twenty-five claims available, or one for every claimant if they had been standing forty feet apart. Here, with all kinds of conveyances ranged four to seven tiers deep, they must have averaged about a man to the foot. Not as bad elsewhere, but nowhere were there anything like enough claims to go round.

As my brother and I were strolling along the line we came upon a friend of his, gazing down at the ground with blood in his eye.

'Somebody will get this land,' he muttered, kicking the dust with his foot. 'Why not I?' At the crack of the rifle, he was going to stick his flag right there in front of his feet. Would we two stand by, and bear witness for him that he was the first man to claim this quarter section?

We glanced at each other, and winked. We had n't been born yesterday in the land game.

Carefully we explained that ours was a pleasure party exclusively, — we did n't want anything on our minds to

mar the serenity, — and besides, how about the eight hundred and sixty-four men with blood in their eye now digging their toes into the half-mile front of this same pretty farm? No, — sorry, — but we still had a craving for life, such as it was.

But this raised interesting questions about what was to happen after twelve o'clock noon, in this most stupendous race ever run. I sat down on a little knoll just behind the line and viewed the prospect — calmly, not having any fevered ideas about the government owing me a farm.

First, about that man with blood in his eye. Who *would* get that farm — and the hundreds of other farms like it, lying in the first row against the border? And the next row of farms, a half mile out? Or the next — and next? Or any within, say, the first five miles?

The whole jam would be going over them practically at once. Ten, or a hundred, — or none, — might drop the flag on any one of these near-by claims; swearing to the time would mean nothing, with country watches running minutes apart, where it was to be a matter of seconds. Then what earthly judge could decide which got to any claim first?

Why try to get there first, if it could n't be done? Why not drop off and stick a flag anywhere, then fight it out with perhaps a dozen others who had done the same thing on the same quarter section?

As clear as daylight, — or, to use a more apt Western term, as 'sure as shootin', — getting a farm anywhere within that first five miles was to be a matter of bluff, or buying off, with the chances in favor of the nerviest man. Beyond ten miles, most settlements would be arranged by just plain 'shootin' past the ears.'

Then I took to picking winners — an engaging pastime at any race.

About those two-wheeled racing gigs, and the sports with the buckboards, and the fastest horses: these men could never have ridden in a gig, or a springy rig, over any kind of prairie without knowing that speed would very soon toss them into the air. A slow trot is the best that can be done over raw prairie. Then why the fast horses, even if they should happen to miss the prairie holes? Few winners in that lot.

Those range men on their prairie mounts, swinging easily into the front line: it is past eleven now; they will not ride fast — they never do. Among them are some not so good at riding anyway — merely tough chaps, engaged in keeping out of jail. But they all have prairie mounts, and they all will ride sure. No hurry. They are taking this afternoon ride, not to win a race, but to get land by the gun route. Most of them will get it — if they don't have a falling out and try to get each other.

The prairie schooner — the 'covered wagon,' as this generation knows it: here by the hundreds, loaded with stoves and chairs and babies and chickens, with now and then a pig; pushing in against the back of the racing line, without exactly knowing why.

In spite of what the moving pictures tell you, take it from me that while prairie schooners have housed many good and deserving people, they have housed more scalawags, and most often of all the wandering ne'er-do-well, the all-wise, know-nothing soldier of misfortune, the nomadic Western renter. Elsewhere, he is the sage of the corner grocery. He does better at wrestling with the tariff than at making a living for his wife and children. His farming is a joke. He moves along every year — broke, plus one more in the family. And he blames everything except the child upon the currency.

For months he has been camping all the way down from 'Ioway' or somewhere, to have, at last, a farm of his own in the Cherokee Strip. But now his cocksureness is wobbling; something in the figures lined up ahead dispels his dream of a home for the asking. His great lumbering schooner cannot make the run — this much penetrates. So he proceeds to 'on-hitch' his least-winded plough horse, and gets astride.

IV

A quarter to twelve. The line stiffened and became more quiet with the tension of waiting. Out in front a hundred yards, and twice as far apart, were soldiers, resting easily on their rifles, contemplating the line. I casually wondered how they would manage to dodge the onrush; perhaps that was what they themselves were thinking about.

The engine, a few hundred feet away, coughed gently at the starting line, while its tender, and the tops of its ten cattle cars trailing back into the State of Kansas, were alive with men. Inside the cars, the boomers were packed standing, with their arms sticking out where horns ought to be.

Just then, as we learned afterward, a few miles east of us somebody's revolver was accidentally discharged. A middle-aged man on horseback, mistaking it for the starting gun, dashed at a gallop across the line.

'Come back!' yelled the crowd, in a wild, inarticulate roar; but the man imagined the pack at his heels.

'Halt!' commanded the soldier in front. No one could have heard him above the din.

That soldier did what he had a right to do: he shot the man through the head. Too bad that he did not think to shoot the horse.

Five minutes. Three minutes. The soldiers now stood with rifles pointed upward, waiting for the first sound of firing to come along their line from the east. A cannon at its eastern end was to give the first signal; this the rifles were to take up and carry on as fast as sound could travel the length of the Cherokee Strip.

All set!

At one minute to twelve o'clock my brother and I, noticing that the soldier out front was squinting upward along his rifle barrel and intent on the coming signal, slipped out fifty feet in front of the line, along the railroad embankment. It was the best possible place from which to view the start.

There were supposed to be somewhere around one hundred thousand men in line on the Kansas border. Within the two-mile range of vision from our point of vantage, there were at the least calculation five thousand, and probably nearer eight.

The waiting line, viewed from out front, was a breath-taking sight. The back of the line was ragged, incoherent; the front was even, smooth, solid. It *looked* like the line-up that it was. I thought I had realized the immensity of the spectacle; but that one minute out in front gave the unmatched thrill of an impending race with six thousand starters in sight.

First in the line was a solid bank of horses, — with riders, or hitched to gigs, buckboards, carts, wagons, — but to the eye there were two miles of tossing heads, and shiny chests, and restless front legs of horses. The medley of grotesque speed outfits, the stupendous gamble, the uniqueness and the farce and the tragedy of it — these faded before the acute expectancy of a horse race beyond words, incomparable.

While we stood, numb with looking, the rifles snapped, and the line broke

with a huge, crackling roar. That one thundering moment of horseflesh by the mile quivering in its first leap forward was a gift of the gods, and its like will never come again. The next instant we were in a crash of vehicles whizzing past us. It was like trying to see a hundred three-ring circuses at once; and it was over while the mind was reaching for the start. But between the crack of the rifles and the dip of the last lumbering prairie schooner over the hills there was begun, made, and finished a chapter by itself in racing history.

Then we sat down on the little mound of made earth that had fended off the rush, and looked out at about half-a-dozen wrecks picking themselves up on the prairie.

With returning sanity came details of the run. The first to be remarked was the early trailing of the racers, well strung out from the start; and not all of those in the lead were horsemen. Some of the racing rigs were making good; fast horses were all right, so long as they could keep their feet. One man in a two-wheel spring cart was well up with the first horseback riders as they went over the hills; at every bounce he threatened to miss the seat on the come-back, but our last view showed him still hitting safe.

The funniest of all the starters was the engine, with her ten carloads of men. From our exclusive stand fifty feet directly in front of her, I happened to be contemplating the thing as the race's chief absurdity when the rush began. The engine tooted incessantly and labored hard, but of course she could not get under way with anything like the quickness of the horses. The incongruity of starting a contrivance like that with a lot of horses and calling it a *race* made us laugh — not only at her waddling so ridiculously behind at the start, but because we

knew that the crowd aboard intended to be way ahead of the horsemen long before the finish of the race, if moral suasion or cash inducement could make the old girl cough a little faster than the rules allowed.

Of course, everybody on the train was openly mad with excitement, without a chance to vent his emotion in any but some noise-making way. With the first toots of the engine came revolver shots from the crowds along the tops of the cars, and a few from those inside. The fusillade, keeping up all the while the train was pulling out past us, had a most exhilarating effect; my old gun, I suddenly noticed, was barking with the rest of them.

For any man who was a fair sprinter, the best chances of the run were aboard that train. It was to stop only at a few town sites, but one was not bound to take a town lot because he was on the train; he could run either way into the country and stake a farm, and be in competition only with those off the train. He would be limited to the farms within running distance of the town sites, but those, naturally, were the most valuable farms in the Cherokee Strip. That train carried into the Strip what might be termed a load of legally qualified sooners.

V

The last of all the freak conveyances to leave the border were a couple of bicycles. Leisurely we started south on the Texas stage trail that followed the general direction of the railway track. We wanted to get in as far as possible that night, camp on the prairie among the boomers, then go on to the town sites Sunday morning for a change of scenery.

Freight wagons were already on the road in an almost solid stream, carrying

supplies to the boomers. It had never been more than a prairie trail, up to this twelve o'clock noon; now, surprised by the extraordinary traffic, it sank dejectedly into a couple of sandy ruts. Many of the wagons avoided it; so did we, and rode on the prairie, except where the horse paths inside the tracks had not been cut to a powder by too many heavy shoes.

Traveling over virgin prairie on bicycles is possible, but not to be lightly recommended as a pleasure trip. At a hundred in the shade in a shadeless country, and with a strong head wind just blown in from Texas, it might with reason be mildly discouraged. This was our sentiment, after having done twenty miles of it.

A country two hours old, with a boomer sitting on every square half mile, — or even three or four gentlemen sitting on the same quarter section, and regarding one another with disfavor, — still looks remarkably like untouched prairie. Three or four men to the half mile make a scanty population. The rush had gone by, and now — until darkness should set in — it was to be a case of suspended animation.

Some of these personal arguments probably were settled at once, on the spot, and in broad daylight; but the general understanding was that, in the case of several men on the same tract, the first night in the Strip was to determine which got there first. That first night was to be a tough one for tenderfeet.

Twice during the afternoon we sampled the cussedness of those riding ahead of us. These knights of the front line had fired the grass — nothing like a prairie fire in a strong head wind to take the courage out of boomers already dropping behind. On the upland prairie, where we happened to encounter these amiable gestures, the

grass was thin. In thin grass a prairie fire runs slowly and has a way of creeping ahead of itself in spots, giving one a chance to step sideways across a bit of its line where there is no flame at all. We slipped through with no inconvenience, carrying our bicycles over the hot stretches of ground to save the tires. Men on not too timid horses could have picked the open spots as easily; but vehicles, especially prairie schooners and freight wagons, are not good at dodging sidewise, and horses refuse to jump through even such mild little tongues of flame as these were.

The freighters stuck to the beaten-down trail, as offering a safe but narrow path through.

In the deep thick grass of the draws, prairie fires travel with a roaring heat at high speed. There were reports of these same fires catching prairie schooners in draws, consuming them, and badly burning the occupants. Fortunately the great drought had left few valleys sufficiently grass-grown to be dangerous.

Other reports had to do with sooners. Feeling ran high; and at least one sooner paid the penalty. Some boomers told of a deep ravine where they had found a man hanging to a tree. On his shirt was pinned a note: 'Too Soon.'

My younger brother had an experience with a particularly nervy sooner that afternoon. He had made the run for land on a sure-footed mustang; had run at the head of the line for ten miles, in an hour and ten minutes, to a section picked out before the opening. Arrived there, he found a sooner coolly standing beside a horse whose hair was not even damp.

My brother promptly told him that that horse had not traveled a foot since the opening. For answer, he found himself looking into the little round

hole of the sooner's rifle. He at once conceded the point, went on three miles farther, and staked a claim. At a time like that, the wrong end of a gun is the most convincing of arguments.

At six o'clock we were only twenty miles in; but that twenty miles loomed up like a day's work. Inflating and mending tires had taken a good deal of time, since we had been riding on the sharp stubble left by the fires. Deflation, too, of our own energy by the rough prairie and a head wind had slowed us down to little better than a walk. Six miles ahead was Pond Creek, the first town site of any importance. We could make that in the morning.

So we picked a little dip in the land where there were no gopher holes, — rattlesnakes have a way of inviting themselves as guests into the gophers' homes, — spread our blankets, and sat down to a hearty supper. But with the water it was different. A general inquiry for water since the middle of the afternoon had made everybody cautious in the use of the canteen, in spite of the heat.

After supper we strolled over to a little rise and had a view of the country. It was a fine stretch of prairie, slightly depressed, and for that reason more desirable than the upland. Perhaps that was why we noticed considerably more than one man to the half mile.

Very soon after sunset came darkness, and with it a multitude of stars. It was a blaze of light above, but pitch-dark below; the brilliant starlight of an over-clear air seems to have little power to illuminate the earth.

But these matters did not interest us. Dog-tired, we rolled up in our blankets, rested our heads on our bicycle wheels, and dropped off to sleep.

A little before midnight, we woke up

to a distant clatter of hoofs, shouting, and shooting.

'Number — section — township — range — K-e-e-p o-f-f and g-e-t o-f-f!' Then crack! crack! went the rifles, after each call, from the pretty country we had been admiring at sundown.

The exercises had begun.

Evidently a gang on horseback were cleaning up a few quarter sections in the district for their own use. Once they swung around within a few rods of us, judging by the sound; but we could not see them, and it stands to reason that they did not see us, or we should have had callers.

The affair seems to have been no more than the time-honored business of 'shootin' past the ears.' In those first nights and days of the merry life in the Cherokee Strip, a few well-placed shots next to the organs of hearing started many a tenderfoot on the run for his home town back East.

After listening to the clean-up for a while, we fell asleep. Suddenly, at early daylight, a clatter of hoofs woke us again. Three horsemen had drawn up, and were looking at us. Then, 'Whatcher doin' here?'

This was where the gun came in handy. It enabled us to talk with more assurance. We told them the facts: we were not claiming this land, — did n't care whose it was, — were just camping on it, and intended to stay there till *after breakfast*.

They were sensible men. They noted the gun, and the accent, then rode away. If they had ignored both, and had ordered us then and there to move on, we should have done so. In that case *we* should have been the sensible ones.

Since daybreak, boomers had been straggling northward, bound for Kansas and all points east. One young fellow who stopped for a moment while

we were eating breakfast was a fair sample of the 'headed-out' crowd. He asked for water, and we gave him a biscuit. Our few drops were no more. He had staked a claim in our nice little valley, along with a half-dozen others on the same tract; and of course nobody under heaven could know who had arrived first. But for him the delicate question had been settled by the gay horsemen of the night before. By the time they were through with him, he felt assured that he must have arrived about a week late.

'I would n't live here next to such neighbors anyway,' he told us with considerable heat. There was no need to tell him, since he had lost his claim, that if he had stayed he never would have had those men for neighbors. Farming in the Cherokee Strip was the last thing in the minds of any of these gun toters. Somebody would have to live on these claims for five years as homesteaders, but not they; their plan was to get possession, file on it, then sell their relinquishments to farmers.

It was to be the story of every move into the prairie frontier: first-crop settlers, mostly 'fly-by-nights,' then a second incoming of farmers. Always the huge economic waste of an almost complete resettling.

VI

Now we were off for the town sites. Inside of the first mile, our tires were hopelessly down. It was to be a walk and a push of six miles to Pond Creek. Same heat, same howling head wind. We had to lean our way against it at about two miles an hour.

The one weak spot in our equipment — in everybody's equipment — was the size of the canteens. All of us might better have carried twice the weight and had twice as much water. Now, as the forenoon wore on, that dry

breakfast and the heat were making an impression.

We were meeting boomers all the time now, headed out, with the usual story of several on a claim. By a lucky chance, we happened to spy a wagon with two barrels in it, half a mile off on the prairie. It was water — warm to the touch, but still water. The men said they had hauled it in from Slate Creek, Kansas.

We knew Slate Creek. It was all right to bathe in, if one could wash off afterward. But they gave us all we could drink, and our canteens full, for forty cents. A little farther on we came upon several men examining something in the bank of a little ravine. It was a drop-by-drop trickle of what had been a spring, and they were in line for the water. We tipped them off to the two barrels from Slate Creek.

The town site of Pond Creek had stopped only a small portion of the boomers riding on that cattle train. Most of them had preferred to seek their fortunes in Enid, twenty miles farther south, where the government had established its Land Office.

Pond Creek, less than a day old, was already admitting that it might turn out to be a small town. This was a most extraordinary concession. If any new frontier town, having the bare prospect of surviving as a post office, could not sell lots at least one mile out, its citizens were deemed lacking in the true spirit of progress.

But Pond Creek was growing, that Sunday morning, as fast as tents and board shacks could be put up on the newly acquired lots. Wagons and freight trains during the night had brought in lumber and building materials. The sound of the saw and hammer and plenty of shouting was in the air. Dust was already inches thick on the city streets, kicked up by horses and vehicles in from the sur-

rounding country for water and supplies. Lunch counters across the open fronts of tents were passing out ham sandwiches and black coffee to crowds several deep. At one of these, as we stood waiting, someone announced, 'Lady coming!'

Instantly a clear way was made to the counter — and here came the lady! A bedraggled, sand-biting creature like the rest of us; but in lonely state she ambled up, got her butterless bun and creamless coffee, and shuffled off again. There's chivalry for you!

Under the railroad's water tank a preacher of the exhorter type was delivering the town's first sermon to a shifting handful, as boomers came and went around the friendly tap provided by the company. Down the track a group that passed as a dancing show gave the town its first suggestion of paint.

Men coming in from the upland claims told of horses dying for lack of water, and of men desperately short of it. Few had comprehended the meaning of a waterless country. One man told of getting his horses to town only by giving them spoonfuls of whiskey along the way. How those few whiffs could have spread cheer over the vast extent of a horse it is difficult to understand.

But, whatever else Pond Creek lacked in the way of social and other advantages, water was in abundance. We celebrated the profusion by washing our faces.

VII

Of course we had to see the Big Town, Enid, and share the excitement of the Land Office on its first business day, Monday. Pond Creek's hectic Sunday was only a starter.

We shipped our crippled bicycles out on the train bound north. Their last service had been as pillows the

night before, so low had they fallen from their proud estate; but it hardly seemed worth while to push them another twenty miles merely to rest our heads on the front wheels. Those spokes had an unpleasant way of raking one's ear during the unconscious moments.

Enid was said to have a population of five thousand that Monday morning. The man who gave us this opinion admitted that the number was 'varyin' purty rapid.' This looked reasonable, considering that it had varied from nothing to five thousand since Saturday.

The scenes and activities were much like those in Pond Creek, except that they were on a larger scale and the city was one day older, which made it twice as old as Pond Creek. This wide difference in ages was beginning to tell. Enid had a post office in a little tent, and a hotel in a big one — the Heywood, if I remember rightly. We had boiled beef and potatoes for dinner. This showed that culture was creeping in, and we might as well go back to Kansas.

Off on one of the town lots was a small safe, with a banner on it marked 'THE TIMES.' A newspaper office was being built around it. In a tent

bearing a big canvas sign, 'REAL ESTATE & LOANS,' I found one of our discarded agents of the farm-mortgage days, from the extreme northwest of Nebraska. He was one of those men always in the vanguard of the chronic pioneers.

But the government Land Office was the centre of an activity all its own. Entry men from all over the district were driving in to file their claims. There was a notion widely prevailing that the first to file on a disputed claim gained thereby an advantage. Soldiers held the men to a line, and the line extended off on the prairie for more than a mile — some said two miles. Those way out would be in line for twenty-four, thirty-six hours. There seemed to be no way to speed up the work in the office.

The great spectacle was over. The sordid business of fighting for titles was on.

We had got, richly, all that we came for. Hundreds of boomers, disillusioned, landless, now lined the track, waiting for a chance to get out of the Strip. In the wild scramble to get aboard the north-bound train that night my brother and I were among the winners — by a hair.

The last of the Prairie Frontiers!

THE GHOST OF ALEXANDER PERKS, A.B.

BY ROBERT DEAN FRISBIE

I

THE *Pirara* is a garrulous old hooker, proud of her departed days and fond of reminiscing to me during the night watches below. At times she is querulous, too, complaining of the cargoes of rancid copra she must carry in her old age; of the native passengers who mess up her decks, tie awnings of patchwork quilts to the rigging, and whittle their initials in the rail; or of the parsimony of her owners, who refuse to buy a new winch — the old one is in a sorry plight — or replace the rusty old fore-topmast stay. She even growls at me, her mate, though the Lord knows that I do my best; but it *is* hard to keep awake on clear nights during the twelve-to-four watch.

'Lackadaisy!' she groaned to-night, breaking into my dreams. 'This is a lubber's shift! Rancid copra bulging my poor old ribs; engine-room grease and bilge water washing over my kelson. Why don't you pay a little attention to the pumps? You have n't sounded my well for a week! Fine mate you are for such a lady as me!'

'That is unfair!' I cried in my sleep. 'You know that I watched Six-Seas pumping during the dogwatch.'

The old schooner laughed derisively. 'What a fib!' she cried. 'Watched, indeed! You sat on the wheel box twiddling your thumbs, and you took Six-Seas' word for it when he said the pumps had sucked!' Then sharply, not giving me time to reply: 'Don't say anything! Not a word out of you!'

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You'll only lie and make me angry, and that'll be bad for your soul and my digestion!'

She fell silent as she wallowed in a long trough; then, with a groan, — more from habit than anything else, for, like all old folks, she makes much of her troubles, — she rose to the top of a long sea and lumbered down the other side.

'There's another one over, thank the good Lord!' she muttered. 'My, what a number of rollers there are in the ocean! It is perfectly ridiculous! I've crossed as many as seven thousand in a single day. That was on the good old Shanghai-Frisco run when beating against the northwesterlies. Ah, those were the days! No filthy copra then, but cases of silks and tea, and clean mats of rice with little tins of opium hidden in them. And in those days Captain Pester gave my spars a coat of varnish every four months, all my standing rigging was served, and the brass on my rail shone beautifully. There were no broken catheads or rusty jib-boom guys on me then.'

One bell sounded. I heard it in my sleep, but refused to waken for another moment or two.

'Get up, get up!' the old schooner cried maliciously. She concluded, her voice dwindling away to a murmur that finally merged into the plash of water along her sides: 'Get up and go on deck, Lazybones, and finish your sleep while you're on watch.'

There was a scratching on my cabin port light; then the senile whine of old

Seaside, the Kanaka second mate: 'One bell! One bell! Ropati *tané!*'

I opened my eyes. The scratching continued, irritating me. Knowing it would not stop until I replied, I pounded on the bulkhead, and growled, 'All right, Seaside, you old fool! I hear you!'

The scratching stopped. I jumped out of my berth, lit the lamp, and dressed. Then, turning the lamp low, I climbed on deck just as the Seth Thomas clock struck eight times and the second mate repeated the hour on the ship's bell. He was alone, with the wheel lashed, for we had given the sailors the entire night below so we could work them all day on the morrow holystoning, scraping, and oiling decks.

The old man grinned at me, exposing his three yellow wolf-fang teeth. He sat on the wheel box with the binnacle light full on his deeply wrinkled face, making his sharp little eyes glow evilly. I glanced at the compass and then went to the weather rail to feel the wind. We seemed to be keeping on our course, full and by on the port tack. Returning to Seaside, I asked:—

'Well, old man, how's your friend the ghost to-night?'

I was referring to Mr. Alexander Perks, A.B., the spirit that is supposed to haunt this trading schooner. Mind you, I don't believe a word of it; but the sailors claim they see the old gentleman snooping around every night, trying to get one of them to play draughts with him. Personally, I say it's all nonsense, for I have a theory that there are no such things as ghosts.

'Up and about,' came from Seaside's grinning lips. 'Listen, there he is now!'

'It's only the wind, Seaside, you old fool,' I replied. 'Only the wind moaning in the shrouds.'

'It's Perks,' the old man declared,

his smile fading and an indignant flash appearing in his eyes. Abruptly he turned and pointed to the galley. 'And there he is; I must go and have a yarn with him. I'll be back by and by.'

I glanced forward. There *was* a nebulous glimmer visible through the galley door, and I could understand how a simple native like Seaside might imagine it a ghost. Of course I knew better.

'It's only the moonlight, Seaside,' I said as the old man started forward. 'Only the moonlight shining through the galley window.'

The silly old fellow laughed in his cackling way as he crossed the midship-house deck. 'It's gone now, but still the moon shines,' he said. A moment later he had dropped into the waist and entered the galley, leaving me to my thoughts.

II

Rats and ghosts, I mused, are favorable omens to a sailor, for they always desert a ship that is doomed. There was the old *Lillah Allers*, for instance, which was named after her owner's wife—the owner was his own skipper. If I remember rightly, Mrs. Allers died aboard during a blow off the Horn. *Lillah* must have been a terror to the captain, for she used to come on deck when the wind freshened and make suggestions about taking in the royals, reefing the t'gallant-s's, or tying up the flying jib.

'Woman,' Captain Allers would say to her in his sternest tone, 'thy place is below; get thee below to thy sewing!'

This would make the old lady rave, for she believed that in a tight place she was more level-headed than the captain; also, she claimed to have presentiments which never failed her. Well, she died that night off the Horn while she was in the midst of one of her presenti-

ments. She had rushed on deck to declare that something terrible was about to happen. Just then the spanker backed, carried away its boom tackle, and, jibing over, caught her on the nape of the neck. She was buried in Latitude 60°18' South; but her spirit stayed by the ship, and Captain Allers used to swear that every time the wind freshened to a gale he could see her hovering above the poop deck, gesticulating frantically, pointing aloft in an effort to give some advice about handling the ship.

'Poor old *Lillah Allers!*' I continued my musing, thinking of the ship, not the lady. The last time Captain Allers took her out of the Golden Gate he knew he would come to grief, for the night before he had seen the ghost of his late wife, a Gladstone bag and a hatbox in her hands, walking hurriedly down the gangplank.

'The ship is doomed!' he told the mate as soon as they were out of the bay, but before they had dropped the pilot. 'My wife's spirit has deserted us!'

The mate respectfully suggested that the captain might have mentioned this before they threw off their dock lines. He added that he would just step into his cabin for his gear and go ashore with the pilot; but the captain would n't hear of it.

Well, they dropped the pilot, hoisted the old *Lillah Allers's* kites, and sailed over the horizon, never to be seen or heard of again!

I walked to the weather rail and watched the clouds of phosphorescence rise and subside. A school of bonito was over our windward quarter, streaking the sea with parallel lines of fire. I could hear from above our masts the squawking of a tropic bird, and from the galley Seaside's whine as he cried: 'Jump me, Perks! You've got to jump!' or cackling with glee as he told

the ghost that he had made the king row. The poor deluded native was imagining he was playing draughts with the spirit of Able-bodied Seaman Alexander Perks!

I returned to my musings, letting my mind wander to stories of other haunted ships. There was the *Ghost Ship* of Richard Middleton that was blown into Host's turnip patch by the great gale; the *Flying Dutchman*; the *Marie Celeste*; the Maori canoe of ill omen that appears at night in the lagoon of an island before a great catastrophe is to occur. Then there was Captain Arthur Mason's *Wampa* with its mysterious Hindu stowaway, who saved the ship during a hurricane by taking orders from the ghost of the dead captain and transmitting them to the crew. Haunted ships are as common as haunted houses, for sailors are as superstitious as old women; their lives are governed by omens and pre-sentiments. Even I, who have a theory that such things are all nonsense, find myself half believing in them at times. There is Perks, for instance. Much though I deride his existence, it is sometimes difficult to disbelieve in him; in fact, it requires all the cogency of my theory to prove him an illusion.

III

'I beat him,' said Seaside as he climbed over the break of the midship house.

'Suppose you turn in instead of snooping around deck and playing checkers with imaginary spectres,' I replied sharply. 'You'll be good for nothing to-morrow unless you get some sleep.'

'Old men seldom sleep,' the second mate told me; 'and to-night I could never lie in my bunk, I'd be that fidgety.'

'What's all the trouble?'

The old man came close to me and whispered: 'We make Vostok Island to-morrow, Captain Andy says, and I'm to go ashore for birds' eggs!'

'All the more reason for you to sleep to-night.'

'But Perks?'

'What about him?'

Seaside leaned against the weather rail and let his sharp little eyes wander aloft. He shook his head knowingly, and again the fatuous grin played across his mouth; but in another moment he was whispering his story to me — whispering it because, as he said, he did not want Perks to overhear.

Three years ago, according to Seaside, the *Pirara* was not a haunted ship; but one day Captain Andy decided to put into Vostok Island for sea birds' eggs, and then all the trouble started. They came along the reef in the afternoon, and Seaside was landed with some empty boxes for the eggs. The reef boat put back to the schooner, leaving him alone. The old man waded through the shallows and climbed up the beach with his boxes, untroubled by an inkling of the harrowing experience which lay ahead.

It was a dreary place, he told me, of coral formation and without more than six feet elevation on its highest point. Not a coconut tree grew there, nor a bush, nor a blade of grass; but inland the island was overgrown with great puka trees, whose huge soft and porous trunks towered straight and slimy two hundred feet in the air, and there broke into a mass of foliage so dense that only a dismal leaden light seeped through, lugubrious, as is the fading refulgence of twilight. The ground swarmed with black Norwegian rats and coconut crabs, the latter a foot long, their bodies scarlet-red, their eyes protruding, their claws powerful enough to snap off a man's finger. Millions of birds roosted like owls on the limbs of

the trees, squawking with a deafening clamor, leaving their perches by the thousand as the old native passed beneath them. Other than these there was no sign of life on that unearthly island.

Seaside felt the awe of the unknown gnaw his bones; his knees weakened and his skin became clammy as he picked his way deep into the jungle, climbing over the trunks of fallen giants, stumbling into crab holes, sinking into quagmires of guano and decayed vegetation. He kept clear of the trunks of the trees, for, he said, they swarmed with rats and crabs climbing to the roosting birds to feed on their eggs and young. Often he could see fights carried on between them, when the boobies would pounce on the rats that were sucking their eggs, tear them from the limbs, and hurl them to the ground; or screaming birds would dive at and circle about a coconut crab that held a fledgling in its claws. It was a horrible scene of carnage that had been carried on for thousands of years — a death struggle between the species.

On into the island went Seaside, his boxes under his arms, hunting for an open space by the eastern beach where the terns should lay their eggs. The gloom of the jungle deepened, the air became rank and nauseating with the stench of sea birds' droppings, decaying flesh, damp vegetation. And the deeper he penetrated the more alive the ground became with evil creeping things.

Suddenly he halted in panic terror, his hair on end and his eyes bulging. Directly in front of him, hanging by a long rope of bark, was a dead man! A few rags of cloth hung to him, a sailor cap sat jauntily on his head. He must have been long dead. Seaside shuddered when he told me that one arm had dropped off; its yellowed bones lay, rat-gnawed, on the ground.

Seaside did not know how long he stood staring at the dead man; but when he did regain enough courage to move he turned with a yell, dropped his boxes, and rushed wildly through the jungle, hunting for the outer beach! He must have run in circles, for an hour passed and still he was in the depth of the island. It seemed that the jungle, with its millions of loathsome creatures feeding on one another, had no end. Twice again he came upon the dead man, each time to increase his terror and send him rushing wildly away.

Several hours passed, when suddenly, it seemed, darkness closed about him, dense and impenetrable. The blackness pressed him from all sides as though a sable shroud had been thrown over him and he had been sunk deep in the sea. He staggered a few feet forward and bumped against a tree. A rat dropped on his head and ran down his body. All about him he could hear sharp squeals, the clicking of the crabs' claws, and, above, the clamor of the birds, though they were quieter now except when a rat or a crab crept upon their young — then the air would be alive with their screams.

Seaside sank on his knees at the foot of the tree. Gradually he became calmer. 'After all,' he reasoned, 'the crabs and the rats can't kill me; the worst that can happen will be a sleepless night on this island.' He felt a little better after this, but still far from easy. He told me an hour must have passed before he saw the ghost of Able-bodied Seaman Alexander Perks.

He had been staring into the darkness, his eyes shifting from side to side, when all at once a nebulous thing formed a few yards from him, danced back and forth among the trees, and then gradually took the shape of a man. It approached to within a few feet, bowed extravagantly, and lifted its hat. Seaside said that the jungle

became aglow with an eerie light which disclosed the dead man a few feet to one side, swinging slightly now, while a dozen rats below his feet were leaping into the air, trying to get at him. After this Seaside lost cognizance of things.

When he came to, there was Perks, sitting on one of the boxes that he had brought ashore for eggs, talking in the hollow tone common among ghosts. 'It's a shame,' he was saying, 'a beastly shame!'

Seaside snapped his eyes closed and started repeating the Lord's Prayer, but still he could hear Perks muttering: 'I see you've come to, now. It's about time. 'Ere I've been marooned fer four years on this blinkin' island, and the first bloke as comes 'as n't the courtesy to treat me wid common civility. So strike me pink if it ain't a shame!'

Seaside opened one eye a fraction of an inch. He noted that the spectre appeared to have a kindly face; but he was far from reassured, so he snapped his eyes shut again and started trembling violently as again he went over the prayer.

'Prayin', so 'elp me, prayin'!' moaned Perks. 'But I suppose it *is* queer-like to see a man o' my profession — Able-bodied Seaman I am, Alexander Perks, A.B. — on a bloomin' island like this. But it's all right, matey, I'm 'armless — only a poor marooned mariner wot's died by 'is own 'and after two years of lonely and pathetic life on this blinkin' desert island.'

Seaside opened both his eyes at this, for he felt sorry for the spirit. He had seen plenty of ghosts before, and though they always filled him with terror he realized that there were both the harmless and the vicious kinds.

'It must have been lonely,' he managed to gasp.

'Lonely ain't no word fer it,' Perks said with a shake of his head. 'It's been unsocial as 'ell. I've been livin' a

retired and 'omeless life widout even a bloke to play draughts wid!

Here Seaside saw tears stream down the poor fellow's cheeks. 'You like to play draughts?' he asked, his fright now gone.

The ghost's eyes brightened with an unearthly light. 'It's been my lifelong 'abit,' he replied, 'and even since my late and lamented end it bides by me.' After a moment's silence a wistful glow appeared in his eyes; he leaned forward and asked: 'Matey, you don't 'appen, let's say, to play draughts, do you? I've the most 'andsome checkerboard on the north beach, beamy and symmetrical.'

Seaside told him that he played a game now and then, whereupon the ghost insisted that they go to the beach and play. Of course this suited the old native, for at least it would mean their getting out of the foul damp air of the jungle. He rose and followed Perks, who drifted among the trees, leaving a ghostly light behind him by which Seaside could with difficulty pick his way. In the course of a half hour they broke through the trees to the clean white outer beach, sparkling with moonlight and swept by a fine breeze from off the sea. Perks stopped before a large slab of coral.

'Ain't it 'andsome?' he asked. 'I marked the squares wid octopus ink, as you can see, and my men are black shells and white ones; only when I makes a king I turns 'im over instead of pilin' one on top of tother, they being too round-like to stand. But I ain't 'ad a game since my sad end, it bein' against nature fer a ghost to move the men. Before my decease I played myself.'

'That must have been a tiresome game,' Seaside ventured.

'Strike me pink, but it was awful,' Perks said; 'always winning from myself, one way or tother! It got so

discouragin', never winning a game decisive-like, that I put an end to it all and done away wid myself!'

They sat with the slab between them and started a game, Seaside moving Perks's men for him. One game after the other he lost to the ghost, sometimes no more than getting a single man to the king row. The night waned, but still they played. Perks became more and more excited over the game; he would scream like a banshee when he won, and an evil glint would come into his eyes when he jumped three men at once or slipped into a saddle between two of Seaside's men. They were near the end of their twentieth game when dawn broke. Gradually Perks dissolved in the morning light, and his voice became fainter until it was lost in a scarcely audible moan which told Seaside of another game he had lost.

The old native looked up from the checkerboard. The sun was just breaking above the horizon; in the offing lay the *Pirara*, her boat over the side and not twenty yards from the reef.

Seaside told me there was the devil to pay when he met Captain Andy and tried to explain why he had no birds' eggs and why he had n't been on the reef the evening before. He mentioned something about being delayed by a ghost; but at this the captain flew off the handle, cursing all superstitious sailors to Gehenna and back again. Seaside stood it as long as he could; then slunk forward and told his story to the sailors. They all knew it was true, and sympathized mightily.

But the strange thing was that, as soon as he came on deck the next night to stand his watch, there was Alexander Perks waiting for him, smiling and bowing and lifting his hat and suggesting a game of draughts. The old gentleman had stowed away, slipping

into the ship's boat under cover of daylight!

Seaside broke from his story, turned quickly and said: 'All right, Perks, I'm coming.'

A cold shiver ran down my back. There, not six feet away, was a strange misty thing, bowing extravagantly and lifting his hat. I shook myself to dispel the illusion; then turned aft, refusing to glance toward the thing for several moments, for I don't believe in ghosts and don't want my convictions shaken by hallucinations. When I did turn, both Seaside and the imaginary Perks were gone.

IV

'Lackadaisy!' the old *Pirara* groaned while I was putting in my twelve-to-four watch below. 'Death comes to old and young alike.'

'What a hackneyed thing to say!' I replied sharply — the old hooker had nearly wakened me. 'You might be a little more original.'

'Patience, my son,' she went on, a note of true pathos in her voice. 'You should be more considerate of the dying.'

'Dying?'

'Alas, yes; my day has come, and now I find myself so close to Christening Grooves that —'

'Christening Grooves! What's that?'

'Such ignorance! It's the paradise for dead ships, where every morning the ghost ships waken on the grooves of launching, stout, tight, shining with paint and varnish and polished brass. Every morning the crowds are there, watching fair maidens break bottles of champagne on the ghost ships' bows.

Then everybody cheers while the band plays "Life on the Ocean Wave," the cameras click, and the ships slip gracefully into the water!'

'And every morning it happens all over again?'

'Every morning.'

'Why do you moan about dying, then?'

'Death is a sad thing,' the old lady sighed. 'For instance, all of you, whom I have learned to love, will probably perish at sea! Alas! You should n't have allowed Mr. Perks to go ashore!'

I shuddered in my sleep as I queried, 'Perks ashore?'

'Of course,' she replied. 'He's back on Vostok Island again. He went ashore with Seaside this morning when the captain sent him after birds' eggs. Why, even the rats were trying to jump into the boat!'

'Then we're lost!' I cried in my sleep.

The old lady became sarcastic. 'Don't let that trouble you,' she murmured. 'Fiddler's Green is quite as good a paradise for sailors as is Christening Grooves for ships.'

She chuckled to herself.

'One bell! One bell! Ropati *tané*!' came Seaside's senile whine, followed by the scratching on the cabin port.

I jumped from my berth and ran on deck. 'Seaside, you old fool!' I shouted. 'Is it true that Perks went ashore with you?'

The old sinner grinned and nodded his head in affirmation.

Twenty-four hours later we were all in the reef boat, watching the *Pirara* plunge to Christening Grooves before we started pulling the hundred and twenty miles back to Vostok Island.

POOR MARTY

BY WILLA CATHER

*A lament for Martha, the old kitchenmaid, by her fellow servant,
the stableman. The servants are not Negroes, but 'poor whites.'
(Old Virginia)*

I

Who will scour the pots and pans,
Now Marty's gone away?
Who will scald the milking cans
And put the cream away?
Who will wash the goblets tall,
And chiney plates along the wall,
Platters big and platters small,
Never let one crack or fall,
Now Marty's gone away?
Ding-dong-dell, ding-dong-dell, poor Marty's gone away.

Who will clean the kitchen sink,
Ringed with grease as black as ink?
Not the Mistress, strict and cold,
Not the Master, meek and old,
Not our Miss in lawn and lace,
White of hand and fair of face.
Nor her sister, Marty's dear,
Played the harp for her to hear.
(Ever would the poor soul smile,
Rocking on her tired feet
When the harp strings sounded sweet —
Wiping all her goblets clear
To the music of her dear.)
Who will wash the things away,
Wash them three times every day?
Sixty years she never missed
While her hand hung to her wrist,
Never broke a plate or cup.
Who will wash our dishes up,

Now Marty's gone away?
Ding-dong-dell, ding-dong-dell, poor Marty's gone away.

Who will start the kitchen fire,
Now Marty's gone away?
When the house is all but dead,
Maids and mistress fast abed,
Windows rattle, stair steps groan,
Cookstove gray and cold as stone,
And the handle of the door
Froze to make your fingers sore.
Marty she was thin and old,
Little fleshed against the cold.
But she loved the maidies well,
Ever feared abroad to dwell.
All her life she feared to fall
Unto strangers after all,
To abide the poorhouse end.
Love and fear can both befriend.

Who will feed the winter birds,
Now Marty's gone away?
Snowbirds brown and robins red
Used to flutter round her head,
At the window open wide.
'T was our Mistress' fantasy
Neither cat nor dog might bide
For poor Marty's company,
But the birds came through the air
For the crust she had to spare.
Ding-dong-dell, ding-dong-dell, poor Marty's laid away.

II

On a moonlit winter night
Marty made her kitchen bright,
Wiped the pot-black from her hand
For before her Lord to stand,
She knew no other way.
No man earthly saw her go,
But she was gone afar we know
Before the break of day.

Mistress rang her silver bell,
Fixed to scold poor Marty well;
Master drummed his pewter pot
For his shaving water hot;
Miss and Missy waited long
Never thinking aught was wrong.
I must give my beasts their corn
With no bite or sup that morn,
For Marty's gone away.

Little had she here to leave,
Naught to will and none to grieve.
Hire nor wages did she draw
But her keep and bed of straw.
'T was our Mistress' fantasy
Marty might not trusted be
With fire to warm nor light to see,
In her kitchen loft.
But our Mistress could not bar
Light from moon or light from star,
Or from farther off.

'Martha,' said the angel, 'rise;
Come with me to Paradise.
Never heed thy needy shift,
Hers the shame who gave the gift.
Never hide thy choppy hand;
He, who waits, will understand
When He sees thee. Martha, rise;
Come with me to Paradise.'

Would that I prepared might be,
Clean of all this world like she;
Hands that never gathered aught,
But in faithful service wrought.
Naked as a babe new born
Went she forth that winter morn,
And not a stain she bare.
She, I pray, may housèd be
With Kindness, Love, and Charity —
Better off in ease than we,
Now poor Marty's gone.

AMERICAN EDUCATION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

COMPLAINT within the teaching profession about the quality of education in America has lately taken an interesting turn. For forty years, to my knowledge, — I do not know how much longer, — professional criticism has confined itself pretty strictly to matters that went on under the general system, and has not questioned the system itself. It has run to questions of pedagogic method and curricular content; to the *what* and the *how*. One notices with satisfaction, however, that within the past year some of our educators have gone beyond these matters and touched the system's structural principles. The presidents of Brown, Haverford, and St. Stephen's have spoken out plainly. Professor Giddings, of Columbia, has been very explicit, and even the president of Columbia has made some observations that might be construed as disparaging. These gentlemen have spoken informally, mostly by implication, and not pretending to present anything like a complete thesis on the subject; nevertheless their implications are clear.

One wishes they had gone further; one hopes they may yet do so. My own reason for writing is that perhaps a layman's view of the situation may call out additional professional comment on it. One need make no apology for the intervention, for the subject is quite within the layman's competence. Matters of content and method (the *what* and the *how*) are primarily a professional concern, and the layman

speaks of them under correction. But the system itself is not a technical affair, and its points of strength and weakness lie as properly under lay review as under professional review. In any kind of fairness, indeed, if professional opinion takes responsibility for correctness in technical matters it has enough on its shoulders, and lay opinion may well take the lead on matters which are not technical.

I

On its moral and social side, our educational system is indeed a noble experiment — none more so. In all the history of noble experiments I know of none to match it. There is every evidence of its being purely an expression — no, one may put it even stronger than that, an organization — of a truly noble, selfless, and affectionate desire. The representative American, whatever his faults, has been notably characterized by the wish that his children might do better by themselves than he could do by himself. He wished them to have all the advantages that he had been obliged to get on without, all the 'opportunities,' not only for material well-being but also for self-advancement in the realm of the spirit. I quite believe that in its essence and intention our system may be fairly called no less than an organization of this desire; and as such it cannot be too much admired or too highly praised.

But unfortunately Nature reckes

little of the nobleness prompting any human enterprise. Perhaps it is rather a hard thing to say, but the truth is that Nature seems much more solicitous about her reputation for order than she is about keeping up her character for morals. Apparently no pressure of noble and unselfish moral earnestness will cozen the sharp old lady into countenancing a breach of order. Hence any enterprise, however nobly and disinterestedly conceived, will fail if it be not also organized intelligently. We are having a fine illustration of this great truth in the fate of the other noble experiment which Mr. Hoover commended on moral grounds in one of his campaign speeches; and an equally conspicuous illustration of it is furnished by the current output of our educational institutions.

Our educational pot has always been sufficiently astir; there can be no doubt of that. It would seem that there is no possible permutation or combination in pedagogic theory and practice that we have not tried. The roster of our undergraduate and secondary courses reads like the advertisement of a bargain counter. One of our pioneer women's colleges offers, among other curious odds and ends, some sort of 'course' in baby tending! Our floundering ventures in university training have long been fair game for our cartoonists. Only this morning I saw a capital cartoon in a New York paper, prompted by a news item on some new variant of a cafeteria or serve-self educational scheme vamped up in one of our top-heavy state universities. But now, after all this feverish and hopeful fiddling with the mechanics of education, the current product seems to be, if anything, a little poorer than any that has gone before it.

This statement may rest as it lies. I see no point in a digression to define

education or to describe the marks that set off an educated person. If I were writing on oyster culture, I should consider it a waste of space to define an oyster, because everyone likely to read my paper would know well enough what an oyster is; at least, he would know very well what it is not. Similarly, everyone likely to read this article may be presumed to know an educated person from an uneducated person. But if this seems a cavalier way of dealing with one's readers, one may establish a perfect understanding by a reference to Mr. James Truslow Adams's paper in the November 1929 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. It is enough to say that one who, by whatever means, has compassed just the discipline intimated by Mr. Adams,—a discipline directed as steadily toward *being* and *becoming* as toward *doing* and *getting*,—and who in all his works and ways reflects that discipline, is an educated person. One who has not compassed it, and whose works and ways do not reflect it, may not properly be called an educated person, no matter what his training, learning, aptitudes, and accomplishments may be.

Mr. Adams's paper makes it clear that the educated American is not often to be met with; and there is a pretty complete consensus that he is at present much scarcer than he was, say, twenty-five years ago. An Italian nobleman of high culture, who has seen a great deal of our college and university life, lately told me that he had made a curious observation while here, and asked me whether I thought it was a fair one, and if so, how I should account for it. He said he had now and then met Americans who were extremely well educated, but they were all in the neighborhood of sixty years old; he had not seen a single person below that age who impressed him as

having been even respectably educated, although interest in the matter had led him to look everywhere. It is unsafe to generalize from a single opinion, but it may be worth remembering that this reference is the judgment of one foreign observer of experience and distinction.

This state of things is obviously not due to any deficiency in our mechanical equipment. What impresses one most, I think, at sight of the Continental school, is the very moderate character of its plant and general apparatus of learning, as compared with ours. I have elsewhere remarked that no live-wire, up-to-date, go-getting American college president would look twice at the University of Poitiers or the old university at Brussels. Even Bonn, the aristocrat of German universities, is a very modest and plain affair in its physical aspects. The secondary schools of France and Belgium have in our eyes an appearance of simplicity almost primitive. Yet see what comes out of them. Compare the order of disciplined intelligence that somehow manages to squeeze itself out of Poitiers and Brussels with that which floats through one of our universities. With every imaginable accessory and externality in his favor, the American simply makes no comparison. Put a cost-accounting system on education in France and America, with reference to the quality of the product, — if such a thing were possible, — and the result would be, I think, a most disquieting surprise.

Nor have the French and Belgians any natural advantage over us in respect of raw material. I firmly believe that the run-of-mine American is just as intelligent as the run-of-mine Frenchman, and the picked American as the picked Frenchman. The trouble is not there, nor can I see that it lies anywhere in the technique of peda-

gogy; I must needs be shown wherein our pedagogy is not entitled to a clean bill. Yet the fact is that with relatively poor equipment, with no better raw material and no better pedagogy than ours, French institutions turn out extremely well-educated men, and ours do not.

The whole trouble is that the American system from beginning to end is gauged to the run-of-mine American rather than to the picked American. The run-of-mine Frenchman does not get any nearer the university than the adjacent woodpile. He does not get into the French equivalent of our undergraduate college. If he gets through the French equivalent of our secondary school, he does so by what our ancestors called the uncovenanted mercies of Providence, and every step of his progress is larded with bitter sweat. The chief reason why my Italian friend found no educated Americans under sixty years of age is that forty years ago the run-of-mine American did not, as a rule, get much nearer the founts of the higher learning than the run-of-mine Frenchman does to-day, and for the same reason — he could not, speaking strictly, 'make the grade.' The newspapers some time ago quoted the president of Columbia as saying that during the past half century the changes in school and college instruction, as to both form and content, have been so complete that it is probably safe to say that to-day no student in Columbia College, and perhaps no professor on its faculty, could pass satisfactorily the examination tests that were set for admission to Columbia College fifty years ago.

The root idea, or ideal, of our system is the very fine one that educational opportunity should be open to all. The practical approach to this ideal, however, was not planned intelligently, but, on the contrary, very stupidly; it

was planned on the official assumption that everybody is educable, and this assumption still remains official. Instead of firmly establishing the natural limit to opportunity — the ability to make any kind of use of it — and then making opportunity as free as possible within that limit, our system says, Let them all come, and we will scratch up some sort of brummagem opportunity for each of them. What they do not learn at school, the college will teach them; the university will go through some motions for them on what the college failed to get into their heads. This is no jaunty exaggeration. I have a friend who has spent years in a Mid-Western state university, trying to teach elementary English composition to adult illiterates. I have visited his classes, seen what they were about, seen his pupils, examined their work, and speak whereof I know. A short time ago, in another enormous university, — a university, mind; not a grade school, but a university dealing with adult persons, — two instructors published samples of the kind of thing produced for them by their students. Here are a few: —

Being a tough hunk of meat, I passed up the steak.

Lincoln's mind grew as his country kneaded it.

The camel carries a water tank with him; he is also a rough rider and has four gates.

As soon as music starts, silence rains, but as soon as it stops it gets worse than ever.

College students as a general rule like such readings that will take the least mental inertia.

Modern dress is extreme and ought to be checked.

Although the Irish are usually content with small jobs, they have won a niche in the backbone of the country.

At the hands of some upper-classmen and second-year men, Shakespeare fared as follows: —

Edmund, in *King Lear*, 'committed a base act and allowed his illegitimate father to see a forged letter.' Cordelia's death 'was the straw that broke the camel's back and killed the king.' Lear's fool 'was prostrated on the neck of the king.' 'Hotspur,' averred a sophomore, 'was a wild, irresolute man. He loved honor above all. He would go out and kill twenty Scotchmen before breakfast.' Kate was 'a woman who had something to do with hot spurs.'

Also Milton: —

'Diabetes was Milton's Italian friend,' one student explained. Another said, 'Satan had all the emotions of a woman, and was a sort of trustee in heaven, so to speak.' The theme of *Comus* was given as 'purity protestiate.' Mammon, in *Paradise Lost*, suggests that the best way 'to endure hell is to raise hell and build a pavilion.'

Would it be unfair to ask the reader how long he thinks that order of intelligence would be permitted to display itself at the University of Brussels or the University of Poitiers?

II

The history of our system shows a significant interplay between the sentiment for an indiscriminate and prodigal distribution of 'opportunity' and certain popular ideas or pseudo-ideas that flourished beside it. One of these was the popular conception of democracy. It is an interesting fact that this originally got its currency through the use of the word by politicians as a talking point. Practically all publicists now quite arbitrarily use the word 'democratic' as a synonym for 'republican' — as when, for instance, they speak of the United States and France as 'great democracies.' The proper antithesis of democracy is not autocracy, monarchy, or oligarchy, but absolutism; and, as we all know, absolutism is much deeper entrenched

in these republican countries than in monarchical Denmark, say. The term, too, became debased in its more special uses. In the America which Dickens visited, a democratic society meant one in which 'one man was just as good as another, or a little better'; this phrase itself is of sound American coinage current with the merchant. Democratic manners to-day, as a rule, mean merely coarse manners; for instance, the ostentatiously 'democratic' luncheon etiquette of our booster clubs means that all hands shall, under some sort of penalty, call each fellow member by his given name, regardless of previous acquaintance or the lack of it.

Thus the educational free-for-all sentiment got a very powerful endorsement. It was democratic. Poverty-stricken Tom, from the slashes, should go through school, college, and university hand in hand with Dick, the scion of Wall Street, and toplofty Harry of the Back Bay. Democracy so willed it, in spite of Nature's insuperable differentiations whereby Tom had first-rate school ability, Harry had excellent ability in other directions but no school ability, and Dick was a *Dummkopf* with no ability of any kind. Privately these differentiations might be recognized, indeed must be, but it was of the essence of democracy that there should be no official or institutional recognition of them. The unspeakable silliness of our truant laws, which make compulsory attendance a matter purely of school age instead of school ability, appropriately expresses this limitation.

The very human but rather ignoble tendency to self-assertion which led us to put the label of democracy on what was merely indiscriminate or vulgar led us also to put the label of greatness on what was merely big. With a whole civilization groveling in the unintelligent worship of bigness, a great school

must be a big school. The thing to notice is how admirably this fell in with pseudo-democratic doctrine and also with the noble but ill-starred sentiment pervading our system. To make a big school, students must be got; to get them, standards of eligibility must be brought down to a common denominator of intelligence, aptitude, and interest. Then, when they are got, something has to be found for them to do that they can do, or at least upon which they are able to mark time, — such as 'courses in English,' the number of which exhibited annually by our institutions will amaze the reader, if he has curiosity enough about it to look it up, — and this means a profound sophistication of requirements. It can be seen at once how solidly sentiment and pseudo-democratic doctrine stood behind these developments and encouraged them.

By another interesting coincidence — these coincidences in the history of our system are really remarkable — these developments also met, as if made to order, the great and sudden expansion of the nation's industrial life, the glorification of profit making, and the implied disparagement of all intellectual, æsthetic, and even moral processes which did not tend directly or indirectly to profit making. It was promptly perceived that the ineducable person might become a successful banker, industrialist, broker, bond salesman, or what not; plenty such there were who could manage no more than to read the stock quotations and write their own signatures — Daniel Drew, for instance, and Cornelius Vanderbilt. Thus vocationalism came at once to the burdened system's aid. Circumstances were created whereby the ineducable person might bear directly on the business of banking, brokerage, industry, and so on, with the prestige of a college or university

career thrown in. The elective bargain counter was extended all over the academic floor space; its limit was only at the line where imaginative ingenuity broke down and ceased to work; and certain fragile windflowers, such as 'courses in English,' were distributed over it here and there, partly by way of garnishment, partly as camouflage. Thus everything was made satisfactory all round. The ineducable person was taken care of with an academic career to all appearances as respectable as anybody's; sentiment was assuaged; democratic doctrine was satisfied; the general regard for size was satisfied, and so was the general preoccupation with profit.

III

In discussing the effect of all this, I wish to make it as clear as possible that I am not laying the slightest blame upon our educators. They had to take the system as they found it; its faults were none of their making. They had to meet measurably the egregious demands of a noble but indiscriminating sentiment, a preposterous misconception of the democratic principle, a childish reverence for bigness, and an exclusive preoccupation with profit making. It is a large order; if in practice they were able to meet these demands by ever so little obliquely, one might reasonably ask no more. With this clearly understood, we may observe that one immediate effect is a calamitous overlapping of effort, whereby the lines marking off the school from the college and the college from the university have been obliterated. As in the case I cited, the university is doing work that by the handsomest possible concession one would say should be done in the eighth grade. The secondary school and the undergraduate college, again, are overlapping on the university in their

furtherance of vocationalism. Hence, whatever may be done for sentiment or democracy or the promotion of profit making, none of them are doing anything for education. An institution, like an individual, has only twenty-four hours a day, and only a limited amount of attention at its disposal; and so much of time and attention as it devotes to one pursuit it must take from another.

This overlapping, indeed, gives rise to a great deal of justifiable avoidance on the part of educators, or what I understand is better known as 'passing the buck.' In looking over an undergraduate college last year, I remarked to the president that, on the one hand, he seemed to be doing a good deal of rather elementary school work, and at the same time trespassing pretty heavily on the university, especially in his science courses; so that on the whole his college made me think of the small boy's objection to some asparagus that his mother offered him—it tasted raw at one end and rotten at the other. He said this was so; he had to give way to vocationalism somewhat—much more than he wished; he was doing his best against it. As for the other matter, it was the fault of the schools; they left ragged holes in the boys' preparation. 'Don't you think we should do something for the poor fellows who come to us with these deficiencies?'

'Certainly,' I replied. 'Fire them.'

'Ah, but then we should have no students, and should be obliged to shut up shop.'

'Well, but at that,' I suggested, 'would it really be such a killing misfortune?'

'Possibly so, I think,' he answered, after a moment's reflection. 'My ideas are the same as yours precisely, but needs must when the devil drives. We are doing only half a job, I know,

— perhaps not that, — but we are doing it better than any other college, and perhaps that justifies us in keeping on.’

There may be something in this, — I personally doubt it, — but that is another matter. The point is that we can see clearly just what it is to which this lamentable situation runs back. The secondary school must take in all the shaky material sent up from the grade school, for of such is the kingdom of democracy. In its turn the grade school must take in all the enormous masses of human ineptitude that are dumped on it by the truant laws; and thus from one end of our system to the other do we see the ramification of the four social principles that our civilization has foisted on it as fundamental.

A second immediate effect is the loss, in practice, of any functional distinction between formative knowledge and instrumental knowledge. Formerly a student gave up, in round numbers, the first twenty years of his life to formative knowledge; his pursuits during this time were directed exclusively toward the *being* and *becoming*. That was the stated business of the school and college, and they kept him so busy with it that he hardly knew there was such a thing as instrumental knowledge in the world. He got his introduction to that later, at the university or technical school, where first he began to concern himself with the *doing* and *getting*. I have not space to discuss this aspect of our system at length, — done properly, it would take many pages, — but I think the reader will have no trouble about perceiving it in all its relations with what has been said already.

A third effect is the grotesque and monstrous shift of responsibility from the student to the teacher. Formerly the teacher had none of it; now he has practically all of it. The student who

formerly presented himself was capable of learning; that was what he was there for; it was ‘up to’ him to do it, and he did it. The teacher directed him, perhaps helped him a little, — precious little, in my experience, — but took no responsibility whatever for the student’s progress. The run-of-mine student now arrives, incapable of anything, usually indifferent and incurious toward everything. Well, what is to be done? He may be relied on to do nothing particularly striking for himself, — Nature has attended to that, — therefore what is done must be done either for him or with him; and thus the burden of responsibility immediately passes to the teacher, and there it remains.

IV

For some reason that I have never been able to discover, Mr. Jefferson seems to be regarded as a great democrat; on public occasions he is regularly invoked as such by gentlemen who have some sort of political axe to grind, so possibly that view of him arose in this way. The fact is that he was not even a doctrinaire republican, as his relation to the French Revolution clearly shows. When Mr. Jefferson was revising the Virginia Statutes in 1797, he drew up a comprehensive plan for public education. Each ward should have a primary school for the three R’s, open to all. Each year the best pupil in each school should be sent to the grade school, of which there were to be twenty, conveniently situated in various parts of the state. They should be kept there one year or two years, according to results shown, and then all dismissed but one, who should be continued six years. ‘By this means,’ said the good old man, ‘twenty of the best geniuses will be raked from the rubbish annually’ — a most unfortunate expres-

sion for a democrat to use! At the end of six years, the best ten out of the twenty were to be sent to college, and the rest turned adrift.

As an expression of sound public policy, this plan has never been improved upon. Professor Chinard, who has lately put us all under great obligations by his superb study — by far the best ever made — of Mr. Jefferson's public life, thinks it quite possible that those who formed the French system had this plan before them. Whether so or not, the French system is wholly in accord with Mr. Jefferson's hard good sense in accepting the fact that the vast majority of his countrymen were ineducable, and with his equally hard realism in permitting this fact to determine the fundamentals of his plan. The Faculty of Literature at the University of Poitiers is domiciled in the Hôtel Fumée, an exquisitely beautiful family mansion, built about 1510 by a rich lawyer. From an outside view, which is all I ever had of either property, I should say the Hôtel Fumée carries about as much floor space as Mr. James Speyer's residence on Fifth Avenue. I venture to say that if Columbia University cleared out all its ineducable students, root and branch, its Faculty of Literature could do a land-office business in a house the size of Mr. James Speyer's, with maybe a room or two to rent.

From what Professor Giddings and the presidents of Brown, Haverford, and St. Stephen's have said, I infer that this is the season of repentance. Whether or not it will lead to a season of good works is another matter; I think it highly improbable. Nevertheless it seems useful at the present time that the situation should be diagnosed, and its 'indications,' as the doctors say, taken into account. Artemus Ward once said the trouble with Napoleon was that he tried to do too

much and did it. Just this is the trouble with American education. In my judgment, the indications are simply that the whole school population of the country, above the primary grade, should be cut down by 90 per cent. If anyone thinks that this proportion is too high, let him take it out on Mr. Jefferson, who is much bigger than I am; my figures are fairly liberal as compared with his. With him on my side I make bold to believe that nine tenths of our student population, in university, college, grade schools, and secondary schools, have no more justification for being where they are than they would have for an intrusion upon the French Academy or the Royal Society; and that unless and until this mass is cut adrift the prospects for American education will show no improvement worth considering.

Professional criticism has already suggested that the college and university — and I believe there has been some similar hint about the secondary school — should slough off the otiose bulk of those brought to them by the mere *vis inertiae*, and those who present themselves because it is the thing to do, or as a liberation from home or a furlough for parents; likewise those who are going in for contacts, athletics, husbands, the atmosphere and flavor of college life, or for what I understand the authorities now delicately call 'extra-curricular activities,' whereof the coonskin coat and pocket flask are said to be the symbols. At present this would no doubt account for 60 per cent of Mr. Jefferson's 'rubbish,' probably 70, but that is not enough. The intention of Mr. Jefferson's plan was to off-load all ineducable persons, no matter what their disposition, and to have this relief applied continuously at every point in the system above the primary school.

This reform seems unlikely to be

carried out, and I do not urge it or even recommend it. Conversance with human history begets a deal of respect for Nature's well-established policy of progress by trial and error, and a profound circumspection about trying to anticipate it. The experienced person regards root-and-branch reforms, even good ones, with justifiable doubt. One may be by no means sure — far from it — that it would be a good thing 'by and large' and in the long run for the United States to produce any educated people, or that in its present summary sacrifice of its educable individuals it is not taking precisely the right way with them. I am not disposed to dogmatize either way, and hence I do not recommend this reform, or, indeed, any reform. I am merely recording observations of certain social phenomena, placing them in their right relations and drawing the conclusions that seem warranted in the premises. As to the final desirability of the state of things contemplated by these conclusions, I have nothing to say.

V

Still, education seems as yet to be a subject of experiment with us, and I observe with interest that, according to some educators, the next experiment will be with the revival of the small college. There is obviously no more saving grace in smallness than in bigness; everything depends upon what the small college is like. The forecast, however, sets one's fancy going. Perhaps — one must have one's doubts about it, but perhaps — without too much infringement on Nature's policy, or deflection of our great moral and social mission to the world at large, one small laboratory experiment might be tried, such as has never yet been tried by us. I mean an experiment in educating educable persons only. It would

be interesting and possibly useful to set up two small institutions, a school and an undergraduate college, both so well endowed as not to care a straw whether a student came near them or not, and both committed wholly to the pursuit of formative knowledge; the school's attendance limited, say, to sixty, and the college's to two hundred. The school should take pupils at the age of eight, and carry them on until they could meet the college's requirements. Neither institution should take any account whatever of bogus democratic doctrine, the idolatry of mass, vocationalism, or the pretended rights of ineducable persons. If such persons presented themselves they should be turned away, and if anyone got in and afterward was found for any reason or to any degree ineducable he should be forthwith bounced out.

These institutions should be largely a reversion to type, their distinction being that of representing the pure type, without a trace of hybridization. Requirements for entrance to the college should be the ability to read and write Latin and Greek prose with such ease and correctness as to show that language difficulties were forever left behind; knowledge of arithmetic and of algebra up to quadratics; nothing more. The four years' course in college should cover the whole range of Greek and Latin literature from Homer's time to that of Erasmus, mathematics as far as the differential calculus, a compendium of formal logic, and one of the history of the English language (not literature), and nothing more; and this should lead to the degree of Bachelor of Arts, the only degree that the college should confer.

My notion is that the instructors in these institutions could pretty well follow their own devices for five years, having no students to teach, but that

in ten years things would look up a little, and that in fifty years a review of the experiment would be interesting. One could then make the observations and comparisons necessary to determine what it was worth. I cannot say flatly that I recommend this experiment; I merely say that it would be interesting, might be useful enough to be worth its cost, and incidentally some poor few, at least, of our educable fry would lay up out of it a treasure more to be desired than gold — yea, than much fine gold. Yet it is nothing that I would urge, for quite possibly the Larger Good requires that things should go on as they are now going.

Probably, however, I should give (though in all diffidence) some decorous hint about the sort of thing I should look for from it, if it were carried out under strictly aseptic experimental conditions. The literature of Greece and Rome represents the longest continuous record available to us, — a matter of some twenty-five hundred years or more, if mediæval and Renaissance literature were included, as it should be, — as well as the fullest and most diversified record, of what the human mind has ever been busy about. Therefore the one great benefit of the 'grand old fortifying classical curriculum,' as far as it went, was that on one's way through it one saw by centuries instead of weeks, by whole periods instead of years, the operation of the human mind upon every aspect of collective human life, every department of spiritual, industrial, commer-

cial, and social activity; one touched the theory and practice of every science and every art. Hence a person came out from this discipline with not only a trained mind but an experienced mind. He was like one who had had a profound and weighty experience. He was habituated to the long-time point of view, and instinctively brought it to bear on current affairs and happenings. In short, he was mature.

'*Sobald er reflektirt,*' said Goethe of Lord Byron, '*ist er ein Kind.*' Byron was one of the great natural forces in literature, — all praise to him for that, — but of maturity, the best assurance of a right interpretation and right use of personal experience of the world and its affairs, he had none. So, too, the composite American is one of the greatest natural forces that have ever appeared in human society. Perhaps it is as such, and such only, that Nature proposes to use him, and she may intend to fade him out and supersede him when this function in her inscrutable economy is fulfilled, — she has never been any too scrupulous about turning such tricks, — and, if so, it would be hazardous to tamper with the fundamentals of a training that fits him for her purpose. Our system seems to have been constructed in anticipation of just this purpose on the part of Nature; it confirms him in a perpetual adolescence, permits his inner adjustment to the world and its affairs to proceed by a series of juvenile, casual, and disorderly improvisations — *Sobald er reflektirt ist er ein Kind.*

A FLYING TRIPTYCH

BY JAMES MERRIAM MOORE

I. INTO PALE ALTITUDES

THE airy desert that surrounds the earth in rising zones, each of a blue more wan and rare, has been charted as high as planes can fly or pilots breathe. These records read in feet, in pounds, in power, in rate of climb — all mechanical. The little box of polished wood and bright brass and steel, the barograph that I hold in my lap to cushion it from the last jarring of our landing gear against the hard earth which flings us finally into the air, will write a scrawl of ink on a blue-lined roll, to be checked and pondered over. But for me, as we gather speed in a first wide circle over the airdrome, under a clear sky of blue and gold light, there also begins a record that will still be ethereal on dull, repressive days, among walls and trees and people.

(500 feet) Almost at once, nosing up for the long pull, surroundings drop away; and if our arms, thrown wide, could infinitely expand as though taking a great breath, they would touch no lateral obstacle. In the prairies of the air there is no lateral dimension. Downward there is dimension, the most definite; upward also, but that is vague.

(2000 feet) Our airdrome lies on one of many low capes reaching out into sea and bay. The land contracts, but the sea expands to the horizon. Only in the air, or when we look at a globe, do we realize that the world is really two-thirds water. The monotony of a

sea voyage and the constant changes of scene in land travel prevent true comparison under earth-bound circumstances.

(5000 feet) No one has yet painted the ocean from the air. When someone does, critics will be disappointed because it will no longer be a sea they recognize. All the liquid, fluent aspects will be gone. The waves will have stopped, the surface will be plane and frozen, and the aqueous blue, the ultramarine, the flowing purple, will be faded to an indeterminate sheen of ice and sky. The waves will be smoothed as a mason smooths cement, but the whitecaps will remain, wreathed and motionless on the surface, just as when sweepers, clearing the ice for a winter game, leave fine sweepings of powdery snow to mark the curves of ordered broom strokes on the rink, or when a strong gust of wind, blowing snow from the tops of drifts along the shore, dusts the ice with tenuous festoons.

Xenophon's air scouts would never have cried, 'Thalassa! Thalassa!' into the roar of their loud-sounding propellers; they would have thought rather of the polished steel mirror over which some Lacedemonian girl bent with numb fingers, combing her hair on a winter morning.

(10,000 feet) In climbing, the engine always seems to labor. There is no sense of free flight, and if the observer does not wish to find himself always lifting forward in his seat with some involuntary idea of helping the plane,

he had better keep his interest over the side.

(15,000 feet) Looking across from ocean to land again, it is now only a map we see, for not only have the ground forms shrunk to map size, but the various familiar colors have vanished. That is not home down there, but only the conventional, colorless symbol of it. The blue of the hills on the horizon has closed in, creeping beneath us, as the first wisps of oncoming fog precede the dark matrix bank. Perhaps a bit of warmth that is the green of a young, lonely tree, or the red of a roof, flashes through the blue, smoky haze for a last moment. Another hundred feet higher and it has gone. The lines of the ground forms are still distinct, but the whole world is blue — all the blues that range from wood smoke to silver.

(20,000 feet) Beauty lies in color, not in form or line. And blue is God's color: see how much He uses it, especially in places He reserved to Himself so long. But Whistler soloed from Elysian Field over the Thames. I wonder at what altitude he painted. Our meter reads 20,000 now. And I had cautioned myself to take some oxygen at 18,000. Hateful to bother with it while the blues are so fine. How heavy is that familiar-looking glove that gropes for the tube. It misses. Now it is back. There! It has taken the tube and is bringing it up toward my face. Heavy. Heave — heave. Once more. Ah!

The weight is gone. And in its place, suddenly, I have a quick, logical fear. Thrusting forward, I pound the pilot's shoulder. He turns his head, grins, makes the motion of putting a tube (his finger) in his mouth, and nods vigorously. Yes, he is using his oxygen flask. Quite right, too. Many good

flyers have been spoiled by indulging in aesthetic lassitudes in high places. Such are the prerogatives of observers only.

II. THE SUNSHINE OF THE DEAD

Because we were born and live on the land, our minds enlarge it and our thoughts are based on it, although it is only a fringe to the sea and a focusing point for the spaces of the air. When we start on an ocean voyage we watch, at first, the land recede. Finally, toward the end of the first day, — so slow is water travel and so low the prospect, — the 'old' land is lost over the horizon astern. From then on, consciously or not, our expectant glances are always over the bows; we look for the 'new' land that surely lies ahead. Columbus would not have sailed into the West without belief in ultimate continents.

So in the air, when land is lost in haze, when all that remains to us is three paling shades of blue in lieu of land and sea and sky, we unconsciously cease to look down, and we look ahead, upward — for what?

As sailors have sailed out into the blue of sea and never returned, so flyers have flown into the blue of air and have not come back. The mystery of ocean is old, and thus we have legends of Atlantis and those ephemeral lands where the lost have found each other. So now, above, will not the wan light begin to color and deepen again to mark some airy Hy Brasil? Beyond a certain altitude will not the elastic pull of earth stretch thin and break? We have no right to believe there is something higher — our feelings are not proof of it; yet always, inevitably, above a certain point, we look up, expectant.

But the engine strains and labors. We gain no more. We shall not reach Hy Brasil on this voyage. The stick in

front of me moves forward cautiously (our support is so tenuous now) and we nose into level flight. The strain is over. We sail freely in a pale infinity of shaded blue. The pilot cuts off the motor and in the vast silence turns to speak. I did not tell you before, but, to add the last touch to a dream, he is of another race — Oriental, Buddhist. And his precise, small voice comes back as through a telephone. He moves his arm across the void: —

‘I do not like up here. Desso-late. Desso-late.’

With earth and sea utterly relinquished, we have attained while still mortal the first experience and phase of immortality. Even the sun that we knew as golden and warm is a diffused radiance of silver, like northern lights. And we think: this cold glory was the last light they saw, those who came up before us and never returned — the sunshine of the dead.

III. THE RETURN OF OISIN

Oisín, son of an Irish king, went to live under the sea with the lady Niamh. After a year, vaguely troubled with the nightmare that he would never again reach earth, he begged from her the means of return and went back in spite of her warning and her grief. When he set foot on earth the magic fell away and the century of his faërie sojourn fell upon him. A bent old man sought friends long dead.

Our compass has lost its meaning. North, south, east, and west will not help us to find the earth we have left. If we should float into some hiatus in the natural laws we know, what unrecorded Odyssey would begin! But the pull of earth is still drawing; our bodies sense it though we have no other guide. Blessed Saint Gravity, the final patron of the upper air.

The scream of the motor is cut to a

whisper in the void. We are dropping fast in great swooping circles, swallowing to soothe our clacking ears. The deep blue below melts toward the horizon as we bore down into it. The horizon is a circle, not an arc. Suddenly a ploughed field flashes as a streak of white among blue forests. The map emerges to meet us. It grows, rolling outward in all directions. Familiar ground forms appear. A tiny light pricks out. Down there it is almost dusk now, though our sun is turning more brilliant and golden. Suddenly its pink light strikes the ground and all the lost warm colors glow again.

There is only one zone left now. I lean over the side, breathing deep in anticipation. And it comes, warming and dispersing the keen, soulless air; the smell of soil and smoke and flowers, faint, homely, hardly sensed on earth, but to the flyer the poignant signal of return from the zones where there are no time and no space, where all senses are canceled except those of the process of thought and the motion of body in a medium too infinite itself to move.

After the loss of all criterions it is easy to fear lest we also have been away from earth too long. It is natural eagerly to watch the familiar landmarks appear, define themselves, and grow. But land and water, even brick and steel, remain for ages. Will those dark moving marks down there be the same folk we left? The tragedy of Oisín wells up as the motor roars and quiets, roars and quiets, in the last spiral before landing. The moving dots are people now, symbols no longer — people having only faces and shoulders, like cherubim.

And finally, as we float in, I distinguish one face I know so well, a pale carnation nestling in gray fur. Oisín is a myth. Our wheels strike. The trees and houses surround us again.

GEORGE BORROW

BY ARTHUR COLTON

I

FORTY years ago William I. Knapp was teaching Spanish at Yale. Like Borrow, he was a natural linguist rather than a precise philologist. Certainly he knew Spanish — in fact, he wrote a Spanish grammar; French, of course; Italian and German not so well; Gypsy enough for conversation, and Arabic perhaps not enough. The exact degree of Borrow's knowledge of some fifteen languages, including Hebrew, Armenian, Manchu, and the chief European tongues, is also doubtful, but he must have spoken Spanish, Gypsy, Welsh, and Russian fluently. Like Borrow, Knapp went to Catholic Spain on a Protestant mission. He sedulously followed the trails of Borrow's journeyings there some forty years after him. Like Borrow, he was a 'character,' but not of the same kind — a fleshy, sedentary man, social, volatile, and full of the milk of human kindness.

We were but three or four in his Spanish class. We learned to read Spanish easily enough, and have all, I presume, forgotten it as easily. The memory of that class throws a slant light on the obscure problem of education. Our interest was to keep him talking. 'But, gentlemen, we must return to the lesson!' 'But, professor, what do you think of . . . ?' 'Ah, well, now as to that . . .'

The Spanish language has faded from our casual memories; but there were other and curiously fruitful things:

glimpses of the great world of men and affairs, old Spain and its byways and peoples, the background of history and romance, the emotional quality of Spanish words, odds and ends of anecdotes oddly remembered. George Borrow used to vex his father by taking no interest in law, but poring over queer Armenian words and being intimate with unkempt gypsies. One seems to get more education from the byways than the highways. One learns and recites a thousand lessons. Peace to their dust! But what one remembers are William Graham Sumner's grinding snarl as he emptied the nothingness out of a popular fallacy, and Knapp's globular chuckle over a compost-scented proverb of Sancho Panza's. It is the intonations, more than any argument, which linger and continue to convince that it is not necessary to be a fool, nor amiable to be a prig.

Knapp lived in Spain many years, became Madrid correspondent of the *London Times*, and brought home a notable collection of books, which ultimately formed the nucleus or starting point of the great Hispanic Society Museum in New York. He wrote the *Life of George Borrow*, connected his name permanently with an English classic, and died years ago in Paris. Incidentally he introduced me to *Lavengro* and *The Bible in Spain*.

II

Borrow is almost a cult. There are Borrowians, and there is the Gentile

world that knows him not. *The Bible in Spain* was well received, but *Lavengro* was unsuccessful. The downright Englishman wanted to know if he was reading facts or fancies, and there was no answer at the time. There are two questions here. Is *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye* (to use the singular, since they are really one book in two volumes) an autobiography, a truthful narrative from the memory, a genuine thing so far as conscientious endeavor could make it? Or is it, as Borrow called it, a drama whose principal characters are Lavengro, Petulengro, Mrs. Herne, the Flaming Tinman, the Applewoman, Peter and Winifred Williams, the Man in Black, and Isopel Berners?

The question is answered by Knapp, so far as its inherent difficulty can be met. The second question, where-in lies, for some of us, the fascination of Borrow, we must answer for ourselves.

He was born in 1803. His father was an army officer employed in drilling recruits for the Napoleonic Wars, and the family moved from place to place, until in 1816 it settled in Norwich on the elder Borrow's retiring pension. From the age of thirteen to twenty-one Borrow lived in Norwich. In 1824 his father died, and he set out for London, April 1, 1824. He left London on May 22 of the following year, with a suddenly and oddly acquired twenty pounds in his pocket, for that wandering episode which occupies three fourths of *Lavengro-Romany Rye* and of Borrow's actual life covers about three months, from May 22 to about the middle of August. The disproportion is increased by the London episode, which absorbs about half the remaining fourth.

The disappointment of the public was therefore not unnatural in a 'Life' in which seven eighths were

devoted to less than a year and a half, and largely to casual and extensive conversations. Was it a Life or a Story?

The last words of *The Romany Rye* are these: "I should n't wonder," said I, as I proceeded rapidly along a broad causeway in the direction of the east, "if Mr. Petulengro and Tawno Chikno came originally from India. I think I'll go there." It was August 1825, after the Horncastle Fair. Thereafter follows the so-called 'Veiled Period' of seven years, lying between *The Romany Rye* and *The Bible in Spain*. Borrow was wont to hint mysteriously of Far Eastern travel, but it seems that he never got beyond Constantinople, and that was years after in no very adventurous style. He seems to have gone, sometime in 1826, to Spain, the South of France, and as far as Genoa, probably on the one hundred pounds profit from the sale of the horse at Horncastle Fair. But the Veiled Period was only veiled because it was painful to remember, a period of poverty, failure, and humiliation, hack work and translations, passed in Norwich and London.

In 1833 he entered the employ of the Bible Society as a linguist, and spent the next two years in Russia; a large part of five years thereafter in Spain; and the veil was lifted. For the Russian period there are numerous letters. He lived in St. Petersburg, translating and editing. He proposed to go to Manchuria, but the project failed. For the Spanish period there is *The Bible in Spain*. In 1840 he returned from Spain, married a well-to-do widow, and settled in the country.

The dates of his principal books are: *The Gypsies in Spain*, 1841; *The Bible in Spain*, 1843; *Lavengro*, 1851; *The Romany Rye*, 1857; *Wild Wales*, 1862; *Romano Lavo-Lil*, 1874. He died in 1881.

III

Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn, in the preface to his autobiographical *Mid-Channel*, declared the difference between fiction and autobiography to be superficial. 'Both are forms of narrative in which experience is reexpressed in an intelligible and timeless form. . . . The I that speaks in the autobiographical form is an inextricable blending of a person and a symbol, of a man and mankind, of the concrete and the universal. In brief, autobiography is not a method of reporting, but a form of Art.' Mr. Lewisohn was not fortunate in his phrasing. Good fiction is not all experience reexpressed. Why 'timeless'? Is not a method of reporting itself a form of art? Personally I prefer art with a small *a*, and have a constitutional dislike for anyone who regards himself as a symbol. But with the general direction of the idea one may discreetly sympathize. An autobiography is generally the way a man's life looks to him, looking back, and so looked at it does not look like the Saxon Chronicle. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* in biography that is not *auto* — the school of M. André Maurois — is to some of us irritating to the point of profanity, but autobiography seems to be another matter. Even the lies that a man tells about himself are documentary and reveal him.

Borrow had an extraordinary memory. It seemed to him that he could not forget anything, and wished he could. His 'Note Books' are packed with conversations. *The Bible in Spain* was nearly all of it in his letters to the Bible Society, written on the spot, conversations and all. It is quite possible that most of the *Lavengro* conversations as well as incidents are substantially accurate. But he had obsessions. He was a queer person, subject to melancholia, and possessed

of prejudices as hard and twisted as oak knots.

Knapp became convinced of two things: first, that Borrow never invented a character; and second, that the more one delved in the obscurities of that period, the more one was impressed with the truth of the picture. 'No truer books were ever penned. . . . Not in public documents, but in out-of-the-way pamphlets, obscure handbooks, local almanacs, rural newspapers, and old magazines, that is where I met *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye*, and rejoiced to find them true.'

Borrow first called his autobiography a 'Dream,' and then a 'Drama.' There were both dream and drama in it, and the public raised the cry of 'fiction.' He was a creature of moods and manias. *Lavengro* is more moody than *The Bible in Spain*. But he was no Dickens, and the curious and vivid people who throng his books were not created but remembered. He did not look back through a glass darkly. The incidents of the past came up alive and blended with talk; and went down on the page in prose as sound as William Cobbett's.

Why invent, if memory pours out an effortless flood? He remembers the shape of the buttons on the coat of a man seen once and forty years before. He never forgets a place or a name. His facts came easier than his fiction, and were better stuff. The fictional parts are usually perceptible. Names are altered, dates sometimes wrong. He often understates his age by several years. Whenever the dialogues run on his anti-popery obsession they become not only suspicious but tiresome. The Man in Black is not a character but a symbol, with little of human substance in him. Borrow's anti-popery vendetta seems to date from his Spanish experience. There is no trace of it in his writings before *The*

Bible in Spain. When he came to write *Lavengro*, he antedated the feeling.

IV

One afternoon in the summer of 1824 the funeral cortège of Byron was passing down Oxford Street in the brilliant sunlight, and Borrow met it. 'A glittering, gorgeous lordling!' Unhappy? A great poet? He would soon be out of fashion and forgotten. It might be better to have been a Milton in poverty and blindness, for fame after death is better than the top of fashion. Still, he wrote *Childe Harold*, and that ode. What had George Borrow to do with fame or fortune or fashion, toiling the long summer over *Chronicles of Newgate*, compiling criminal biographies for a grim-visaged publisher, and getting nowhere?

'A great poet, sir,' said a dapper, smirking man by his side, 'but unhappy. Fate of genius, sir. I too am frequently unhappy.'

So, turning away, he met his friend Ardry, who had seen Byron in Venice with two fair ladies and not looking unhappy. 'Come with me to Joey's. Three dogs are to be launched at his bear. As they pin him, imagine him to be the publisher.' 'No (said I), I am good for nothing. I think I shall stroll to London Bridge.'

On London Bridge he thought of suicide, and had a notable conversation with the Old Applewoman, and read in her book, the *Life of the Blessed Mary Flanders*, until the twilight dimmed the page.

He did not think he was like Byron, and was not, very much. Nevertheless he was as romantic as he was realistic, and his romanticism was of the Byronic era. The self-hero of the Byronic dream was an aristocratic wanderer with a dark background of mysterious sin. The Borrowian self-hero is a wan-

derer too, somewhat insistently mysterious, a tall youth with white hair, eccentric, imperturbable, and surprising, possessed of strange knowledge and at home with all men in all places.

He was something like Byron, something like Cobbett, something like Trelawney or Doughty, rather more like Richard Burton; something like Defoe. 'Hail to thee, Defoe! What does not my own poor self owe to thee!' He knew as much as Defoe did of criminal biography. He had fits of melancholia, and called them 'the horrors.' His prejudices were as bony and muscular as his forearm. His most lyrical admiration was for prize fighters. There were no 'fair ladies' in his story, except Isopel Berners, the Amazon of the dingle, tall, yellow-haired, aggressively virginal, and handy with her fists; a grand woman, who was born in a poorhouse, could not learn Armenian, and thought it unfair to marry him because he was mad.

As a silent brooding child, supposed to be weak-minded, he was sitting one day before a farmhouse, with a dog and an ape beside him, and drawing queer lines in the dust. A Jewish peddler, who knocked at the door, said that the child looked like a prophet's child, and leaned to inspect the lines. 'He started back and grew white as a sheet'; took off his hat, making strange gestures, cringing, chattering, showing his teeth, and departed muttering, 'Holy letters!'

Was it a 'straight recollection, or a family anecdote become visualized, or a mixture of both? A direct impression of early childhood, and a family anecdote become visualized, look much the same to one's backward gaze. To Borrow all incidents tended to look dramatic, and his writing instinct was to stop short and leave an overlap of mystery. The mysteries are more provocative than baffling. Where he had

seen Hebrew letters he does not tell, but that 'raging curiosity' was already awake, and that brooding persistency. The terror of the Jew needs no explaining. The Borrowian mystery differs from the Byronic. It is highly specialized.

'Petersburg has finer streets [than Madrid], Paris and Edinburgh more stately edifices, London far nobler squares, whilst Shiraz can boast more costly fountains, though not cooler waters. But the population! The population of Constantinople is extraordinary enough, but to form it twenty nations have contributed. But the population of Madrid, however strange and wild and composed of various elements, is strictly Spanish, and will remain so.' He had never been in Shiraz except in daydreams, nor as yet in Constantinople.

I do not believe that he met the Old Applewoman's long-lost son ten miles from Salisbury. I suspect he met a sailor ten miles from Salisbury and romanced the meeting into a dramatic coincidence. I believe with Knapp that Borrow's autobiography is not only substantially but peculiarly true, not because he had any conscience in the matter, but because his phenomenal memory gave him all he needed in vivid detail. He could not create character, but he saw it. He did not invent incident, but he made it live again, and sometimes it suffered sea changes. His dialogues with gypsies and Spaniards are flavored with the language in which they occurred. The effort to reproduce what came back to him so distinctly, so audibly, gives here and there a curiously tinted English that reminds one of the colored idioms of Maeterlinck and Synge. His genius was based on his memory, but it was also dramatic and mimetic. A burly, positive Englishman, a queer stick, and a great writer.

V

An autobiography is the way a man's life looks to him looking back, and it does not look like a chronicle. It looks more like a dream than a drama. There are vast stretches of it in which the evidence that one lived at all is only inferential. It is not a continuous line, but disconnected, a matter of spurts and splashes. The memory jumps from picture to picture. Days are not equal to days, or years to years. There are moments that bulk larger than years, and flash out between featureless gray clouds. And through all the cloud and flash, the emerging and disappearing, the shifting panorama of memory, moves the portentous thing, one's self. 'In the universe I am nothing; for myself I am everything.' Life repeats life, the common human story, but each to itself is unique. 'We live and move in a world of shadows, in which there is one intense reality, the reality called you and I, which perhaps is the vaguest shadow of all,' says Gamaliel Bradford.

Miguel de Unamuno was professor and rector in the University of Salamanca until he was exiled in 1924 by the late dictator, De Rivera. He lectured on Greek literature and the Castilian language. He wrote on many subjects, but the burden of his thought was the intense reality called you and I, and the stark individuality of Spanish character. The Tower of Monterey stands over Salamanca like a phrase in stone, the condensation of a thought, a vision of itself, and 'To the soul that beholds you, Tower of Monterey, you say that he says the utmost that can be said who says himself, who strips his spirit naked in the icy clear light of the civil world. The greatest thing that men can see is another man.'

The importance of the single man dwindles toward nothing in the vast

universe, and melts into a negligible item of one species in the biological flood. From the ruins of ancient dogma we seek consolation in impersonal prospects and oblivious activity. But that is not Spain, nor Unamuno. *La vida es sueño*. Life is dream, but it is dream that abides. 'It is the only thing that abides. Life without dream is but digestion and respiration. My Tower of Monterey, tower of the Spanish renaissance, of nascent Spanishness, tells me that life is not breath that passes away, but dream that abides and triumphs.'

Borrow was in Salamanca in the summer of 1837, noted its magnificent melancholy, but did not mention the Tower of Monterey. The stark individualism of the Spaniard he painted in a score of characters, met and remembered, their looks and their downright talk. He had no philosophic outlook, and his religion, where it was not perfunctory, was national. Like Byron, 'when he thinks he is a child.' His ideas were personal and concrete. He disliked priests and gentility. He liked gypsies, jockeys, prize fighters, and strong ale.

'The truest books ever penned'? The superlative is unnecessary. But they are packed with reality. His eye and ear were devouring and his memory bottomless. He drew from life. Consciously and unconsciously he drew himself, as stark and individual as the Tower of Monterey, as singular and individual as Johnson or Byron or Thoreau. That Byron had a pose does not hide the reality of Byron. The pose was part of the reality. Borrow's picture of himself is edged with daydreams and self-heroism. So is mine; so is yours. The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts, and a touch of mystery makes most of us kin. His romance does not blur his reality. It sets it off.

How far are these conversations genuine? No one knows. Did Borrow himself know? When he thought of Slingsby the tinker, or the Jew Abarbenel, or Benedict Mol and his *Schatz*, or Williams the exhorter, or Mrs. Herne, or the Armenian merchant, or Baltasar the Nacional, or David Haggart on the Castle cliffs of Edinburgh — the recollection came up in a flood of talk. The books are true, not because he strictly wished to make them so, but true with respect to himself because they reveal him, and with respect to the story he tells because his imagination was not the kind that creates things, but the kind that holds them.

VI

The true Borrowian has probably something of Borrow in him, a taste for inns, wayside adventures, and racy humanity; for hard facts with an aura of mystery; for daydreaming and self-heroism. He dreams of being a peculiar person, odd and masterful, traveling as Borrow traveled, seeing the world, as in his time, out of its beaten tracks, free of its smooth conventions. He fancies that he too would rather sit by a gypsy campfire and talk with Jasper Petulengro than in any of those drawing-rooms the excellence of whose conversation is said to be the test of civilization.

Charles Leland, of the Breitmann Ballads, was investigating gypsies at about the date of Borrow's interest, and both were pioneers. Richard Ford at a near-by date had written his *Handbook for Travelers in Spain*, which is still an inspiration to go and do likewise, as well as a Baedeker of byways. Ford wrote to Borrow in 1841 urging him to publish his 'whole adventures for the last twenty years. . . . Avoid all fine writing, all description. . . . The world wants racy,

real, genuine scenes. . . . Avoid words, stick to deeds. Be bold. Avoid rant and cant. Dialogues always tell. . . . Give a peep into Spanish prisons.' The advice was admirable and may have been effective.

But Borrow's magic is his own. He ought to have written a 'Bible in Russia.' *Wild Wales*, though readable, is relatively tame; he was elderly then,

and the fires burned low. Even more than *The Bible in Spain* is *Lavengro* the great book to the Borrovian. It reaches back and stirs the instincts of his youth, or memories of them, when his thoughts were long; when the world was before him full of unexampled events and queer people, and all its prospects and horizons were haunted by that intense reality, himself.

WHO WANTS MY MONEY?

BY FRANCES TAYLOR

I DON'T like to shop, but I do like to buy. There are thousands like me — busy business women and housewives who have a million things to do at home. I am a business woman working on commission, and I make money which I like to spend. My time is money — money for myself and for the retailer. But does the average retailer care? Apparently not, for he makes buying just as much of a time-wasting and nerve-racking performance for me as he possibly can.

It seems that many stores still think of their customers as women with unlimited time. To-day, however, most women are in business, busy with public affairs, or managing a family; with them time and the elimination of waste motions are important matters. They may be willing enough to shop carefully for large purchases like rugs, furniture, and expensive clothing, but the smaller items they wish to buy quickly without shopping.

To indicate how little the stores are aware of this fact, let me tell you of

a recent attempt I made to spend my money.

One day in January I set out with a list something like this: two brassières like my last ones; one pair of flesh-colored side garters; two pairs of women's pajamas, cotton, sleeveless, size 38; two spools of white thread, number 60; an eggshell sweater; a pair of walking shoes like those I had bought the week before (they were so comfortable and good-looking that I thought I had better buy another pair before they were gone); four pairs of lisle socks, size 11; four sets of men's underwear, broadcloth shorts and white lisle shirts; an over-the-bed lamp in either blue or yellow; a fifteen-dollar wedding present. I allowed two hours for these errands.

Three and a half hours later I returned to my office exhausted — without the brassières, the sweater, the shoes, the socks, or the wedding present. So much for the bare story of my time. And what, you ask, did I do with it? Perhaps I should tell you

that I live and shop in one of the five largest cities in the United States. I went first to one of the largest department stores — one with a national reputation and officers who travel round the country making speeches about efficient store management and satisfied customers.

As I walk in the main entrance I decide to buy the pajamas first. I don't know where they are. Is there a direction booth near the door or anywhere in sight? There is not. I approach a pleasant-looking, hatless man and ask about pajamas. I find that I am talking to another customer. (What has become of the old-fashioned floor-walker? He may have been haughty, but you knew him by his clothes and his expression.) I ask a clerk for directions, thus costing the store selling time; she tells me that pajamas are on the fifth floor.

This store does not have express elevators. I enter a car with only one other passenger and we both say, 'Five,' as it starts upward. But the operator has been trained to stop at every floor, open the slow-moving double doors, announce the departments, close the doors, and start upward again. Why should store elevators be run differently from those in office buildings and hotels?

Arriving at the fifth floor, I survey a vast acreage of shoes, hats, skirts — everything but pajamas. Again I ask directions. First girl: 'Sorry, I am new to this floor.' A second girl sends me northeast, where I am promptly sent southwest. There are pajamas of all kinds except the ones I expected to find. Somewhat weary, I select a pair that will do, although they are striped (I wanted plain ones) and have no pockets (I adore pockets).

'Size 38, please.'

'We don't carry anything over size 18.'

To finish with the pajamas let me say that I had to go to three stores before I found them. A week later I learned that the first store had another department of pajamas on the sixth floor full of the kind and size I wanted. Did n't the salesgirl know this? Perhaps she did n't like my looks.

At any rate I knew where the corset department was. To avoid the slow elevator I found the stairs and walked down two flights.

'Brassières, flesh, size 38 — number 416 Toujours.'

The girl disappears for five minutes. 'All out of your size. We have discontinued the model.'

'But that is the model you fitted me to when I bought corsets two weeks ago.'

A shrug.

'How long will it take to order some for me?'

'Not less than three weeks. You had better be fitted to a new style.'

I am still getting along without those brassières.

At the notions counter I ask for a pair of flesh-colored side elastics and two spools of white thread, number 60. The girl returns a few minutes later to say that they are out of both; they are taking stock next week and the buyer can't order any goods until then.

By this time I have had enough of this store. I walk across the street to another one and go to the men's department. I ask for lisle socks and am shown some flashy ones which a fussy lad of eighteen would not think of wearing. 'No rayon, please.' 'We have n't anything but silk socks without rayon.' So I try for the underwear. Again I find sunset effects in rayon, but no plain white lisle.

The next day I visited an exclusive men's store and bought both socks and underwear of the kind I wanted. I noted too that they were cheaper than

the shoddy things which had been offered me the day before. That store is going to get more of my trade in future even if I have to dispense with the door man, auditorium, rest room, hospital, and free-delivery service to Kalamazoo.

But to get on with my shopping. Next I look for my shoes. The store is out of my size and is not going to reorder because spring is so near. This is January. It will take four weeks to get an order through and it may not come through at all. I give up the shoes.

Now for the sweater. I want a good one, so I go to a well-known firm that specializes in women's sport clothes; it has stores in six cities and an impressive shopping card which entitles me to charge purchases in any of them. I find just what I want, but not in my size. The saleswoman promises to get it for me in three days, so I leave my charge address, business address, and telephone number.

After a lapse of ten days I began to wonder what had happened to the sweater. I called up and talked to four people, having asked for the sweater department in the first place. The fourth person said, 'Oh, yes. The manufacturer told us that he was all out of the yarn for that sweater. We telephoned you, but you were out to lunch.' Evidently they have no stenographers in that store. I asked if there was any chance that the manufacturer might secure some more of the yarn. The voice replied, 'We heard this morning that he has some now and can deliver in a week.' Two weeks went by and I telephoned again. I still liked that sweater; having waited so long, I was determined to get it if it were humanly possible. This time I talked to five people before I found one who knew anything about it. She said, 'We heard a week ago that the yarn was

unsatisfactory and that the manufacturer rejected it. I called you up, but you were out of town.'

So I am still without the sweater, but I have made a note to send that store some postage stamps and stationery next Christmas.

Now let me tell you of my experience with the lamp. I go to a store that has been advertising its lamp department extensively. I find the lamp counter, only to discover that nine other customers have found it before me. There is one salesgirl. She makes a sale and fills out the usual income-tax return on the sales slip. Going three aisles over, she makes her own change and wraps the bundle (very badly). The next customer asks for something which, apparently, will never be found, for the girl disappears and has n't been seen since. Finally, after waiting an interminable time, I reach the bursting point. I go to the head of the department and tell him that I have been standing at the lamp counter for eighteen minutes and that I have promised my family to be home for Easter Sunday. His manner makes me realize that I am the unreasonable shopper in her worst form; nevertheless, he takes two girls from a counter that is not busy and puts them on the one that is. He has been in full view of the counter all the time, talking over hockey matches with a friend. One of the girls listens to my request for an over-the-bed light in either blue or yellow. She hunts and she hunts and she hunts, only to report, 'We have only one over-the-bed light; it is pink and it is broken.'

I too am pink and broken, but I manage to reach another store. There I find just the shade I want and think that my troubles are over; but I have forgotten that I am in a systematized store. I decide to charge the purchase, and produce my shopping card and

charge coin. The girl disappears for a few minutes. She comes back with a check. 'If you will go over to the bundle counter with this check, the girl will give you your parcel.' I obey orders and wait at the bundle counter while the girl jiggles the telephone hook up and down with no results. She says, 'The charge girl does n't answer. I'll try again in a minute.' She does up three bundles and then tries again, this time with success. She tells the person at the other end, and several interested bystanders at the counter, that Mrs. Me, 1614 Where-I-live, wishes to charge a lamp at \$5.95. She chews gum and I wait; I have no gum. A bell rings and she hangs up the receiver. She tells another girl what she is going to wear to a dance and then does up my bundle. Holding out a languid hand, she gives me the bundle and takes my check.

I call it a shopping day. I could hardly call it a buying day. I still have n't bought that wedding present, the shoes, the brassières, or the sweater. Somehow I have n't the strength. It's much easier to leave my money in the bank. If I must go shabby, my friends will understand; they too are busy women. Every time several of us meet, the conversation turns to the difficulties of buying. In business women's circles this topic takes the place of the eternal gabble about prohibition among business men.

I realize, of course, that the rapidity of style changes makes it hard for mer-

chandise managers. They must try to plan their stocks to minimize mark-downs. Then, too, they always have on their desks that dreadful little book, 'Beat Yesterday,' with its daily sales totals representing so many hurdles to be got over. Perhaps these are some of the reasons why retailers are thinking more and more about stock control and less and less about their customers' convenience. Whatever the cause, customers are finding it increasingly difficult to spend their money in the highly systematized stores. The situation calls for fewer gestures of service and better quality of performance. Staple stocks should be kept adequate regardless of inventory time. Stores should be so arranged that a customer can find his way about without hiring a guide or carrying a Baedeker map. Then some simple method should be developed to enable a customer to get her purchase in less time than it takes to make her selection. This last, I believe, would do much to increase sales and cut delivery costs. Many times I have articles charged and sent when I would gladly pay for them and carry them myself if it did n't take so much more time.

'Getting back to fundamentals' is the catch phrase of the day, and it applies with a peculiar emphasis to the modern retailer. So, from the bottom of my heart I beg him to heed the moral of my tale: Busy women have money to spend; make it easier for them to buy and they will spend it.

DAY BY DAY IN PEKING

BY IDA PRUITT

I

YESTERDAY I went with some tourists to the Heavenly Bridge to see the coolies' playground. In this wide vacant space north of the Temples of Heaven and Agriculture has grown up the business of amusing, feeding, and clothing the laborers of the city.

This vacant space was once marshland with growing reeds, but here for scores of years the ashes and garbage of the city have been dumped. And on this waste ground has collected a motley assemblage of houses and sheds made of box boards, tin cans, and cotton sheeting. These buildings are arranged with some semblance of squares, but with not too much insistence on order. Two-story theatre buildings are set haphazard, and around them cluster stalls, like lighters around an ocean freighter.

No one lives here, yet the place is always inhabited. The small tradesmen come with their wares at break of day, and some sooner; the amusement seekers throng throughout the hours of light; and for a few hours of darkness the place is in the hands of the caretakers, abandoned and scarce human, fearless old men.

There is a jumble of sheds to which secondhand-clothing merchants bring their wares every morning. Among the sleazy silk garments, or those of half-worn grandeur cast off by the rich, can be found occasionally some piece of rare old embroidery or tribute silk. Shoe stores are spread on the ground with

only a canvas umbrella for shelter. The brocade slipper of a grand lady telling in its fading colors of dinners and Mah Jongg parties sits beside the leather-patched cloth shoe of the laborer, stitched into board-like stiffness. Under awnings are stretched tables flanked by benches and portable stoves. Here coolies sit and eat interminable bowls of Chinese macaroni. They drink sour bean soup while eating wheat cakes garnished with sesame seeds. They eat rice-flour dumplings in which a little red sugar has been hidden. They eat crullers and steamed meat pies, and bean-starch jelly garnished with vinegar and celery and sweet herbs. Great kettles of boiling tripe stand on the stoves. Paper-like pancakes of unleavened bread a foot in diameter are lying in piles waiting to be eaten with the boiled-off bits from the heads of sheep and pigs. The coolies sit at the tables eating and exchanging gossip, and make remarks about the passers-by.

The din is terrific. The secondhand-clothing men, standing within six feet of each other, try each to outsize his neighbor. Garment by garment they lift and wave before the passing crowd, chanting meanwhile the garment's virtues.

'Here is a coat that's scarcely been worn, and all for two dollars and fifteen cents.'

'This skirt of the latest fashion, pure silk and only three dollars.'

Occasionally there is a wag among them, but usually they are content to

sing the ware and its price. It is the rhythm and cadence of the song that matter, and the rhythmic swing of the garments from one pile to the other, broken only by a customer. They are brothers of the mediæval apprentices in Europe, with their continuous cry of 'What do you lack, what do you lack?'

Beggars whine, 'Oh, ladies and gentlemen, have pity on me! Give me a few cash. I have not eaten to-day,' and buzz most irritatingly at your elbow. There is no way to cope with them. If they are not given money, their patience is longer than yours and they follow from place to place. If you give the money, another beggar promptly takes the vacated place.

Barkers standing outside the doors of theatres and side shows shout the names of the performances going on inside, and the amazingly small price of the admission ticket. And through and above and below all the din is the sound of wooden drums and clashing cymbals and shrieking fiddles from the theatres and the singsong houses — in no way diminished by the match-box wooden walls.

II

Selecting the nearest tall building that was bursting with sound, we steered toward it. On the way we refrained from stepping on dogs, bumping into beggars purposely dodging in front of us, or rapt yokels not watching where they were going. We stepped across patches of mud and around a display of felt hats spread upon the ground, and came to the theatre.

'Come right in, the show is excellent. Come in.'

We paid twenty coppers apiece and entered. The ushers showed us to seats. As we were men and women, and the theatre old style and conservative, we all sat in the centre or men's por-

tion. In the big modern theatres in the more fashionable part of town they now let men and women sit together in the women's part. In the most modern theatres, one may sit in any part. These coolie theatres, however, are traditional.

The play on the boards was a classic from the historical novel, *The Three Kingdoms*, and was being played in the classic way. A young warrior was telling the audience, by means of a very beautiful dance, of his extreme fatigue, perturbation, and anxiety. He was dressed in white quilted and gold-studded armor, and fastened to his shoulders were the fluttering flags which tell of military rank. He was Chao Yun, the Chinese Bayard, Balder, Cid, the epitome of knightly valor and beauty, who had followed faithfully, for years, the fortunes of Liu Pei, the founder of the latter Han dynasty.

In this play, Chao Yun, at great danger to himself, presses through the enemy's lines and rescues his master's son. The distracted and wounded mother, carrying a doll, limps across the stage. He does not see her; he still frantically hunts for her. While she stands in the corner, he, mid-stage with his back to the audience, takes a drink of tea. Meanwhile the enemy march in. They are represented by about fifteen men and boys dressed in ragged red embroidered uniforms. They come through one door, make many furious passes, circle the stage many times to show numbers and distance, and then march out again through the other door.

The interlude over, the hero finds the mother and child. He sings his joy, and she her pain and fear. He urges her, by trying to present her with a whip, to mount his horse. She refuses, pointing out that she is too sorely wounded to ride. He refuses to believe her. Then, hearing the enemy near by, he rushes

off to fight them and drive them away. This gives the mother her opportunity. She lays the child on the ground, and the hero comes back in time to see her disappearing down a well. This is managed by laying a chair on its side, over which she jumps, and as she jumps attendants peel off her outer coat, leaving her to run off the stage clad in gray to show that she is now a ghost.

In spite of the noise of the approaching enemy, the hero fills her grave with rocks to protect the body of his master's wife from defilement. This again is a beautiful dance, as he springs and dashes at the imaginary rocks with his spear. Then, with the heir apparent stuck tenderly in his belt, he dashes off the stage on his horse — that is, waving his whip. During most of this act the orchestra has been very noisy, with much beating of wooden drums and clashing of castanets, for this is a military play.

The story of *The Three Kingdoms*, China's feudal period, acted on every stage, told by every story-teller, known to every man, woman, and child, literate or illiterate, is the woof to the warp of their minds, their picture gallery of heroes, the stuff of which their ideals are made. There is difficulty in following the multitudinous characters in its episodic form of composition, but it well repays the reading, and often gives, besides, the cue to many of the words and deeds of the modern war lords.

The next play started off very slowly, apparently with some long-drawn-out misunderstanding, as two civil magistrates sat and sang interminably at each other. We went out. Passing through the food stalls, we came to the amusement tents. The first tent was but a hollow square formed by a single row of benches on which some of the audience sat. It was roofed over by a tent top, and inside the square two

small boys, acrobats and contortionists, were tying themselves in knots and grotesque figures. We watched a minute, threw in a few coppers, and passed on. In the next enclosure a bear and a monkey were tied. The bear, at sight of us, was made to do the kowtow, for which we rewarded his master, he, poor brute, getting a clout on his nose for not kowtowing again quickly enough. The beggars were crowding against us as we stood by the benches, and as a particularly noisome woman, whose face had mostly disappeared, pressed too closely, we went on.

III

At the next tent the audience was chiefly women and children, who were sitting quietly. A tired, dispirited man of forty-odd was whacking a large packing case and telling the audience that nothing possibly could happen unless there were more coppers in the ring. He whacked the box in an absent-minded way, looking as if he wished he were home following a plough. One could see in his eyes the gourd vine over the home well, and almost hear the creaking of the windlass as the old ass turned it in his interminable circling; and the old grandfather sitting under the sunny wall telling endless stories to who would listen. We threw in a ten-cent note, hoping to hasten the dénouement; we were curious to see how these peasants managed the old box-and-boy trick. The man took up a small dull dagger, stuck it carefully, at an angle, into the box through several holes, giving meantime some dispirited patter. A few more coppers were thrown in. The audience was now told that half the money necessary was in hand. We debated throwing in another ten cents, but decided it was not worth while, and passed on. Other tents housed wrestlers or jugglers, and in one was a man selling

some sort of court-plaster made from some part of the snake's anatomy. He had about a dozen snakes, which he pulled out of a box as quickly as they crawled to shelter.

Across an open space was a tent with a cotton-sheeting wall from within which came the sound of fiddles and drums. A man stood at the entrance shouting. Twenty cents admission — this was high. Down a sheeting lane, around a corner, we went. Benches and tables were arranged against the wall and separated by a railing from the ring. In the ring a dozen fat ponies were going round and round. At sight of the augmented audience, a pleasant-faced peasant who was riding one of the horses jumped up in the saddle and gave a mild whoop. He then struck with his whip another horse, on which rode a plump peasant wife, and made it go a shade faster. He urged again; eventually some speed was achieved. Then suddenly we knew that we were watching a 'Wild West Show' in Chinese. Some enterprising person had seen a movie or a circus, or perhaps both. Faithfully our brave alternately beat and chased the horse carrying the fair. Leaning far over, he turned his head toward her with his best imitation Hollywood leer. He was so amused with himself that only half his muscles were able to leer; the rest registered humor, gleeful humor. He was like a small boy, who has just begun to outgrow the game, playing Indians. Lustfully, gleefully, he chased the stolid peasant wife, dressed like a mission schoolgirl. She rode on with never a change of expression, as though she were sitting on the home mat sewing a shoe sole. With one last amused whoop the brave stopped the troop. Stiffly the fair got down, and with obvious relief walked off to the family, sitting around the centre pole of the tent, and picked up a baby.

In this group were several half-grown children and one lassie of about eighteen who answered the barker's patter. He stood on a platform above the entrance, and she shouted her retorts automatically when her cue fell on her. Her mind was busy watching everything that went on around.

A couple of men now picked up a small black object which they placed on a table. After much patter it was unveiled, disclosing a midget, a tiny woman. She was led around the ring to show that she was real; scarce three feet high, she told all and sundry that she was forty-eight years old, and at the showman's bidding opened her mouth to show her few snaggly teeth.

It was time to go; also my quarrel with the harpy-like bench women had reached a stage that made departure advisable. They had started whining for their tips the moment we arrived and gathered an army of their sisters to help. Nor did the ordinary tip quiet them.

We now steered toward a row of tents farther on. We were entreated to look into peep shows which from experience we knew contained pictures of battles or bedroom scenes; we were urged to buy patent medicines warranted to take off all freckles, to have a gold tooth mounted or an ordinary one pulled. The row of tents sheltered story-tellers. A denser crowd than we had seen anywhere else sat or stood around, quiet, listening intently. These audiences were mostly men.

One story-teller stood by his table, teapot, and cups. On the other side sat a lad with a fiddle to accompany him. The story-teller accented his tale by the click of the wooden castanets in his left hand and illustrated it by the gestures of his right hand. He wore, as is usual, the clean white coat and trousers and the neatly fitting black shoes of the gentle classes. Enthralled by his

art, we listened and watched. We could catch only occasional phrases, not enough to get the drift of the story. The drama, however, was evident. He told the story with his whole body, with the castanets, the fiddle, and the table and boy besides. He stepped forward, he crouched, he bent back. His right hand gestured and his left clattered the castanets. But his face — smooth, mobile — expressed each change of mood with the precision and ease of a perfect instrument. We were fascinated and could have watched him for hours. But the beggars, like flies, had settled on the gallant major in our midst, and we moved on.

It reminded me of our first storyteller, whom we saw in a town on our way to the Great Wall. After our early dinner in the Chinese inn, we had wandered out to see the town. Down the street, lit only by the stars, we went, and came suddenly upon a silent group of people around a hollow square. At one end of the square was a lamp on a table. Its dim glow cast a large shadow on the wall behind, which accented and enforced the gestures of the tense man in front. Rapt in the warm gloom, the audience listened as he told them of the siege of Peking in 1900, of the Allies and of the Boxers.

IV

After the crudity of the side shows it was a pleasure to linger by each storyteller in turn, enjoying the finish and perfection of this most ancient of the arts.

We were getting tired, but one thing more was to be done — tea and the singsong girls. Piloted by our amused and interested rickshaw coolie, we walked up the stairs and found ourselves in a medium-sized room in which were placed many small tea tables. At one end of the room was a raised plat-

form on which the girls sat in a row. The obsequious proprietor guided us to our seats and served us with tea and watermelon seeds and hot napkins. A boy with a basket of sweets tried in vain to lure us. On the stage a girl was singing. She was moderately pretty and neatly dressed. The long bangs and straight-cut clothes and direct glance would, however, proclaim her anywhere as a singsong girl. She beat at intervals on a small wooden drum standing on a tripod before her, and a spotty-faced young man accompanied her with a fiddle. The ballad was long.

When she had finished, the proprietor brought the fan on which the girls' names and their repertoires were written, and asked us to choose the next number. As we could not read sufficient Chinese, we looked at the stage and picked the prettiest girl. She had a roving eye and a dimpled cheek, and a long sleek braid of hair. We had picked well. The audience shouted, 'Good!' and she answered with smiles.

It was a small audience. Near the front sat an old man who, after carefully disposing of his fan, his hat, and the skirts of his gown, leaned back, closed his eyes, and with an expression of perfect joy on his face beat time to the music. His face was fine, sensitive, and cultured. Perhaps he enjoyed the emotions called forth by the story of the ballad. The girl may have been singing of the noble general carried captive to Mongolia, who, when tending his enemies' sheep, sang of home; or it may have been the ballad of the daughter of Meng and Chang, at the end of whose faithful search the Great Wall opened to return to her the bones of the husband torn from her side by the great tyrant Chin to help in building his masterpiece, the Great Wall. Perhaps it was an even more remote emotion that swayed the old man. Perhaps it was the music, the tech-

nique, the composition, the rendering. We leave him happy in his world of controlled sound.

At the back of the room was a man of thirty-odd, with an intelligent, guileless face. He might have been a headmaster in a small school, or a suburban merchant, secretary, perhaps, of a guild, a respected man of small affairs — a family man, spending his life between his desk and the home court, his thoughts full of his work, his recreation, and his children; a man of some minor importance in his own world, out, as we were, in a seldom-visited foreign country, aware and interested.

Three officers were sitting at a table by the door, and some nondescripts, perhaps two or three, were scattered about the room. A fat young man was sitting near the musicians, and the girl directed at him her choicest smiles. Sleek and indolent, he sat and appraised. He might have been a rich young man idling away his time. One remembered the stories of the Manchu princes frequenting these places in disguise, and scandalizing the court and the populace. But the Empire is no more, and, as the young man is alone, he cannot be very important. Perhaps he is merely the idle pensioner of an idle group. He goes up to the manager, exchanges a few words with him, looks again at the girl. They understand each other. He gives some instructions and goes away.

I thought of the rickshaws with blue cotton padded hoods in which these lassies ride alone at night, and of the bevy of bright-colored figures who had surged up the steps and chattered across the court of the general's house next door to us. But this was a simple singsong girl, and he was probably a middle-class young man, come to bespeak her presence at some tradesman's dinner. Perhaps she would find there some middle-aged merchant who would

take her as his concubine. Such a marriage would be her highest hope. Marriage is necessarily the goal of these brotherless girls who support their parents by means of this profession. They have no dot; their fathers, poor peddlers and laborers, cannot arrange advantageous marriages; the girls must find their own husbands.

Once, on another visit, I sat and chatted with one of the older girls, while an artist friend drew their pictures. She told me that they live at home with their parents, start their apprenticeship to a master singer at about the age of twelve, and consider themselves failures if they are not married by eighteen. She said, sadly, that her younger sister had married, and she seemed to spend most of her time wondering why she had not achieved a like success. She could not have been over twenty.

As I looked at the row of girls on the stage, some plump, some thin, some pretty, some plain, some mere children, and some with the knowledge of ages in their eyes, it was obvious that some, at least, had not waited to be married.

We were now thoroughly tired, and decided that a quiet turn through the twilight, in the centuries-removed courts of a near-by temple, would take the turmoil of these hundreds of lives out of our ears and let us go home in peace.

V

It had been months since I last saw Chang Teh-fu, and I was surprised to come across him crouched on a street corner behind a basket of sweet cakes and oily crullers. It was a good corner for a peddler, as good as Peking offers. My rickshaw had difficulty in threading its way between the ranks of rickshaws parked outside the Navy Y. M. C. A. Each of these coolies is a potential customer, and a well-paying one, because

the American marines are notoriously free with their money.

But Chang Teh-fu did not look as though he were sharing in any prosperity. His two garments were ragged and filthy, and his face thin and stubbly. He greeted me, however, with a charming smile, and a courtly inquiry after my broken leg. And he arrived at my house the next day to tell me that he could not make ends meet. The most he could make a day was barely enough for the food of one, and he had his old mother.

His story is very common in China and illustrates one of the reasons why the average Chinese does not show more initiative and 'go-getting' traits.

The first time that I saw Chang Teh-fu was six or seven years ago. I was going to the bazaar to shop, and as my rickshaw touched the curb another arrived. I waited until the passenger had paid his fare, and then I spoke to the coolie. From his neck was growing a tumor as large as his head, which flopped with every step he took, and I asked him why he did not go to a hospital and have the tumor removed.

'Does n't it keep passengers away from you?' I inquired.

'Yes,' he said, 'but I can't take time off to go to a hospital. I have an old mother, and we eat each day what I earn each day.'

I gave him my card and told him that I would arrange for his mother's care if he went to the hospital. Strange to say, he had faith and went. The tumor was removed, and he and his mother were fed and the rent paid until his strength returned. A special license to pull in a favored spot was secured for him. Soon he bought his own rickshaw, on the installment plan, and got a position as a private coolie, which placed him in the aristocracy of rickshawdom. And we thought that all was well.

Then things began to happen. He

asked for advances on his pay, and for time off, and so we got the story.

As his prosperity increased, his family increased. One by one, like bees to a honey pot, his wandering brothers came at the news of his regular wages — two brothers and a half-grown cousin, expecting to be supported; and, according to Chinese custom, he could not turn them out. He managed to find a job for one brother, but this brother then promptly got married and brought his wife home for Chang Teh-fu to support.

This marriage carried an extra grievance to him, for, as he said, 'If any one of us should marry, it should be I, as the oldest brother and the chief breadwinner.' But the mother had always been partial to the second brother, though he had never supported her or cared for her.

Chang Teh-fu now had the privilege of working and caring for a family of six adults on a wage that was adequate for the necessities of two, and the comforts were going to another. He took the only course open to him. He gave up his regular job and took again to pulling by the trip, and kept his earnings down. His plan worked. One by one his unwanted and unworking family drifted off, until he was again alone with his mother.

Such stories are only too common. An acquaintance who is running a sewing room for women told me of her effort to increase their personal production. The women all refused to speed up, and expressed themselves as content with what they were earning.

'If,' said one, 'we earn more, we shall only be required to support another person. Why should we tire ourselves?'

Just to finish Chang Teh-fu's personal tale, let me add that an old tubercular trouble flared up, he had to quit pulling rickshaw, and joined that next to the last resort of the Peking poor, the ranks of the peddlers, who may make a

bare living by selling eatables in the streets. And as he cannot earn enough for his mother and himself, he is on the border of the last rank, that of the beggars.

VI

On my way to the office this morning, I saw a condemned criminal going to his execution. The parade was in better formation than most Chinese processions. I use the word 'parade' advisedly, for there was distinctly the air of one, as well as the grimness of death, traveling with that group of people. A squad of ten soldiers, well uniformed in khaki and well mounted on Mongolian ponies, trim and alert, they rode in perfect alignment. As they kept the width of the street between them, they crowded the traffic to the side of the road and forced it to a standstill. The first two soldiers had no guns, but the following eight had each a carbine slung across his shoulder. Behind them walked two squads of police, three men in each, flanking the cart, which thus had a wide open space to itself.

The cart was an ordinary Peking cart of the roofless kind, drawn by one mule. It was led by a coolie in common blue clothes, and on the shafts rode another coolie who was obviously the second driver. But bristling from all sides of the cart and seated in it and on its low wooden sides were khaki-clad soldiers armed with rifles which they held in their hands, ready for use. The cart could not have held more than four or five, but they looked like quite a dozen.

In their midst sat a man in blue coolie clothes with his hands tied and a great cotton-sheathed something strapped to his back and hands. It towered four or five feet above him, looking like a gigantic executioner's sword in shape, and may have been in-

tended as a symbol of what was about to happen to him. The man himself looked around with truculent defiance which ended in a hiccough and a vacant stare. He was probably drunk, as it is the custom to give condemned prisoners as much wine as they care for before starting on this gruesome journey. He was being taken to the execution ground between the Temple of Heaven and the Temple of Agriculture, and an account of his sins was to appear in the next day's paper. There had been many so-called robberies in town lately, and he was probably a thief who had not been clever enough to escape. He looked insignificant and mild, and as if he had long been undernourished.

I asked my rickshaw coolie if he had ever seen an execution. 'Yes,' he said, 'but there is not much to see. A live man does things, is worth watching. A shot in the forehead, and he is just a piece of dead flesh. And the blood and brains are not good to look at.'

Last week one of my assistants was telling of a patient of his who had just died. The old man had a shop where he made and sold brass ware. A workman whose apprenticeship was over and who had gone out to seek his fortune came back demanding money. The old man refused it, whereupon the ex-apprentice seized a chopping knife and hacked the old man so severely that he died in the hospital a day or two afterward.

'Have they caught the apprentice?'

'Yes, they got him the next day.'

'I suppose,' I said, 'that they will execute him.'

My assistant looked a little surprised, and then, being a university student and remembering that there was a difference between Chinese and foreign values, he said, 'He will probably get several months or perhaps a year or two in prison. There was no robbery, you see.'

This little dialogue brought an over-

whelming realization of the sanctity of property and the need for that sanctity. With millions living each day on what each day brings forth, — two meals or one, or none, — with millions who literally never have been really full but once or twice in their lives, while human

beings teem on every hand, is this attitude any wonder? He who takes a life merely reduces the consuming population, of which there are millions too many anyway. He who takes property takes that of which there is much too little to go round.

THE UNREALIST

BY A. W. SMITH

I

THE Deputy Collector, Reggie Tring, sat in his shirt sleeves writing in his office in his bungalow in Iruporei. It was midday and a Sunday in June, and the doors and windows, which had warped and shrunk in the heat, were shut to keep out the hot, dusty wind. Little heaps of gritty dust crept through the crevices and collected on the sills. It was blown by a wind which brought no coolness and which only tried the temper. The punkah of Japanese matting swayed and flapped overhead in a hopeless fashion. The pulley over which the rope passed through the wall to the coolie squatting outside made a little squeaking at each stroke.

Tring picked up and read what he had just written. 'Hindu and Moham-medan, Pariah and Brahmin, are united firmly by a common bond — that forged by their aspiration to political freedom. Then let India gird her loins and, by wielding the powerful weapon of the vote, press on to the full realization of Democracy.'

He liked it. It was the peroration of an essay which he had decided to call

'A Mess of Pottage.' He read it again and liked it more. He arranged the sheets which he had written, squared them with meticulous care, tied them with a piece of pink office tape, and slipped them into a drawer, to repose there, one of a heap of similar manuscripts.

It was a harmless hobby, this of Tring's. Some day he wondered whether he might not have them published as a book to appeal to the few. In the meanwhile he sent them occasionally to a magazine of advanced thought and limited circulation called the *Modern World*. So far they had always been returned.

He leaned back in his chair, and as he did so a sheet of paper stuck to his forearm, detached itself, and fluttered to the floor. He did not bother to pick it up. The effort was too great, and someone would come along eventually and do it for him. In any case it was not important; it was only the rough outline of a judgment which he had finished writing that morning in a case which he had heard the day before. It was a rather involved and complicated case of land inheritance and Hindu family law in which the witnesses had

lied more exasperatingly and unoriginally than usual.

He looked wearily at the sheet of paper. It lifted a corner and skittered across the matting at each puff of the punkah. It halted under the lee of the desk, and when it was obviously going no farther Tring turned his attention to his finger nails. They were sore and the quicks were lifting in the intense dry heat. He was accustomed to their doing that as one of the minor discomforts of the hot season. When the sun blazed down pitilessly and the only clouds were the yellow clouds of gritty dust gathered up over mile after mile of heat-baked plain, with the apparent intention of getting into his hair and eyes, of filtering in gray heaps under the sills of his doors and windows, of getting into his tobacco and making his pipe stem gritty to his teeth, he, Reggie Tring, lonely and isolated in Iruporei, seemed to be the uncomfortable object of it all.

He got up and walked to the window. The wind was still raging outside and the dust pattered on the panes like raindrops. The trees, bare and stripped of leaves, waved dry bones of branches; the leaves, burned hard and brown, swirled in spirals where the dust devils danced. Under the meagre shadow of his compound walls lay three or four panting goats. They always chose that place, and nothing would keep them out. The earth was trampled by their sharp little feet to make more dust fuel for the bitter wind, and over them hung the sour smell of their droppings.

Tring wondered idly whether he would be able to take leave. He thought with longing of the green hills of Ootacamund and the rain whipping in over the rolling turf of the downs, where rhododendrons grew in the sheltered folds. He longed for the refreshing chill of the Nilgiris, — the Blue Hills, — only a matter of hours away,

for wood fires and the quiet companionship of his own race and kind. He had applied for leave, and within ten days, if it was granted, he would be breathing the rare, unspoiled air of the hills.

In the bare branches of a neem tree, the koel, the brain-fever bird, ground out its harsh two-note song, repeated and repeated until the brain reeled and cried for respite.

Times were troubled, and Tring found himself the only Englishman in Iruporei. There were whisperings in the bazaars of which the deafest could not be unaware. They were not the stirring of incipient nationalism, but the outcome of jealousy of religion for religion. The great Mohammedan festival of Bakr'Id was at hand, and a chance word, a fancied slight, might serve to set the city aflame and to throw the two great classes of inhabitants — Hindu and Mohammedan — into rioting and bloodshed. Bakr'Id was always an anxious time in Iruporei, for then the Mohammedan had full license to slaughter cows and goats, a practice which the Hindu viewed with religious horror.

Tring was tired. For the past six months he had seen this coming and he wondered how far it was going to go. It had started with plans for rebuilding the walls of the mosque and the extension of its bounds. By an odd coincidence the tomb of a Hindu saint was discovered on the ground over which the mosque trustees intended to build. For months Tring had tried to find a solution of the problem, and now had come deadlock, tempers short, minds inflamed, and both parties ready to strike at a word. He had used all his tact, and now he could do no more than wait for the storm to break if it would.

Tring left his window and went wearily back to his desk. There seemed to be no way out, and he made up his

mind that trouble was bound to come. How or where it would break out, neither he nor anyone else could say. It would run like fire in dry grass through the bazaars, and it would bring the ruffianly element out of the slums and lanes of the city in the hope of loot. Tring stabbed viciously at a piece of blotting paper with his pencil. The point broke. Things snapped off short if you tried them too far. The Hindu-Mohammedan troubles in the city had got beyond his control. Only by luck could he scrape through. It was all futile anyhow.

'*Divide et impera.*' Tring laughed a little bitterly. It was the taunt which the half-baked lawyers would throw at him and his kind when trouble eventually came.

'Divide and rule.' Ha, ha, ha! The joke was on him and almost too rich not to share. Set race and race at each other's throats to make the ruling more easy. The last six months rose up to mock him — the whole infantile dispute with neither side disposed to move an inch to help.

He picked up his pencil again to go over his emergency riot scheme. The wooden point slid blankly over the paper. He looked at it in disgust.

'*Divide et impera cum pencil fracto*!' — and why the devil did he put in a preposition where an ablative absolute should do the trick? What the hell was the good of a classical education when dealing with fractious Iruporei? 'Mother, is your child fractious? Is the little tongue coated? Give it California syrup of figs. . . .' He would get a bottle — a magnum of syrup of figs — and, properly iced, he would dose them all with a spoon.

Tring pulled himself up short. He wondered where his mind was wandering and he fought for supremacy over the figures which he knew only too well — of police on leave and police

sick. The forces were ridiculously inadequate. With Mr. Khan Mahomed he had been over every inch of the ground.

Mr. Khan Mahomed was the Superintendent of Police and a Mohammedan. His courage was unquestioned, but could he be trusted? In most ways, yes; but this was Mohammedan against Hindu — Mr. Khan Mahomed against the hated idolater. Of course afterward they would say that Mr. Khan Mahomed had been biased.

Tring pulled the file out of his drawer. He had been over it until he knew it by heart. So many police at the Temple thana — so many at the police post at the Secunderabad Gate. The figures danced and jerked before his eyes. California syrup of figs was the best remedy, anyhow. Tring passed his hand over his forehead. The skin was dry and hot to touch. He shivered with cold.

'Damn,' said Tring.

He took quinine and aspirin from his drawer and dosed himself — fifteen grains of quinine and ten of aspirin. He pushed a thermometer into his mouth and lay down in a long Bombay chair with his feet on the sleeves.

So many police at the thana at the Temple, so many at the police post at the Secunderabad Gate, — that made so many, — deduct sick and on leave — He pulled his thermometer out and tried to read the silver ribbon of mercury wobbling before his blurred eyes. His hand was shaking and his teeth chattered. A hundred and one and five tenths. The ecstasy of fever gripped him: so many police at the thana — so many on leave and sick —

The room grew and the punkah waved uncertainly far, far up in the dim heights above him. The room tipped a little. Suddenly the walls contracted, the ceiling rushed toward him. He was burning up and he wanted

air. He put his arm over his eyes to keep out the nauseating sight of the rocking, pumping walls.

Mr. Khan Mahomed was a Moham-medan, but California syrup of figs was a nice peaceful remedy guaranteed to cure all ills.

Outside the wind blew and the brain-fever bird in the dry bones of the neem tree ground out his one-word song. The dust pattered on the windowpanes and Tring shut his eyes and tried to sleep as the quinine, buzzing in his ears, began to do its work.

II

Malaria was no new thing to Tring, and on the third day he got up — a little thinner, rather shaky, and very tired. The fever had gone, and he walked uncertainly across his bedroom to shave. His limbs felt like lead and every movement required a distinct effort. He took a fresh blade for his razor and lathered at the stubble on his chin. He examined his face in the mirror spotted with damp. His heavy lids drooped over his yellowed eyes and he wanted no more than to sleep somewhere in the cool.

He strove to overcome his lassitude. Down in his office they were waiting for Reginald Tring, Esq., B.A., of the Indian Civil Service, to administer the District of Iruporei. Somehow he must get Reginald Tring, Esq., to the office. He wondered how he was going to do it. Reginald Tring had to have his face smooth-shaved before he could sit in court. He finished his lathering and looked distastefully at his razor, wondering how he could lift it and scrape and slice to achieve that immaculate surface which convention and the traditions of his service demanded. It was too much. He dropped into a long chair, his hands hanging loosely over the arms. To sit down was good.

It was all he wanted. Just to rest and watch the lifeless burnt-up fields stretching away to the line of low hills with tops of ragged yellow rock. His eye took the line of the horizon. There was no sound in the house, and outside only a murmur of voices from the servants' quarters. His mind became blank and his thoughts ceased to function. He was in a stupor, his eyes focused on nothing. The lather dried on his face and fell off in tiny flakes as light as snow.

He sat there a minute — half an hour — ten minutes. Tring came to with a start. To-day was Bakr'Id, and Mr. Tring, the Deputy Collector, had to be in the office. Somehow he had to get him there. He dug weakly with his razor at the dry soap on his face until, realizing the futility of it, he dipped his brush in the water and lathered again.

He left his bedroom and went down stairs strange and unfamiliar after three days in bed. He was almost surprised to find his study unchanged — and his papers as he had left them on his desk. In three days of fever upstairs he had somehow hoped and even expected that something might have happened. The absolute unchangedness came as a vague disappointment to him.

He looked at the clock — it had stopped for want of winding. He set it by his watch, glad that at least something had occurred to break the monotony. In ten minutes his car would be around to take him to his office in the Kucherry, where also were the court, the treasury with its net bags of fat clinking silver rupees, the guard of police, and the administrative offices of the Deputy Collector. All were shaded by trees under which the professional petition writers sat in a row, each squatting on his heels before his boxlike desk ready to turn the country-

man's halting flow of Tamil or Mah-rathi into elaborate flowery English. Here, too, the lawyers' touts and the professional witnesses hung round — ready to swear to anything for pay.

Tring, waiting for his car, pulled open his drawer of essays and turned them over — 'A Mess of Pottage,' 'Democracy Wins,' 'Representation.' He wondered idly if they would ever be seen by a world which was urgently in need of them.

His telephone bell rang. Disturbed, he took the receiver off the hook. It was Mr. Khan Mahomed. His careful, clipped sentences came over the wire — his voice thin and excited. Things were quiet — so far, but there were rumors in the city.

'Yes — that's good,' Tring replied. 'I'll be down in a minute.' A thought struck him. 'I think I'll drive through the city. Meet me in ten minutes' time at the police thana at the Secunderabad Gate.' He hung up, and as he did so he heard his car stop in front of the house. Wearily he put on his sun helmet. He was vaguely excited. He sat back on the warm leather cushions and felt his lassitude coming over him again. Nothing mattered very much — after all, he was hardly to blame if two lots of people decided to knock each other about.

He braced himself. He had no right to think along those lines. His was the responsibility first and last. If Mr. Khan Mahomed fired a shot in self-defense, if Mohammedans battered Hindus, his and his alone was the responsibility. The correct and impartial administration of the district of Iruporei rested on the shoulders of Reginald Tring, Esq., of the Indian Civil Service.

He was driven down the shady road under the arching branches of the banyan trees. The sunlight striking through the leaves dappled the dust of

the road. A bullock cart laden with straw creaked on its way to the city. Gypsies herded little undersized donkeys in a drove to help in some kind of road construction. It was just like any other day. These ordinary folk outside the city did n't care — why should they?

At the thana, police, off duty, lounged as usual. Mr. Khan Mahomed was waiting for him. He was in uniform, and this was unusual. He wore a revolver in its holster strapped to his belt. Tring looked at it with distaste, but said nothing. He hated firearms, but it was part of the uniform and presumably could not be helped. A police orderly climbed in front and they drove slowly through the crowded streets of the city.

In the bazaars, the air was stifling. The sun blazed down and they drove slowly through crowds which parted reluctantly to let them pass. The sellers of betel and pan leaves squatted with their trays in what shade they could find. A man with a barrow of over-sweet highly colored drinks tinkled a little bell. Over all there was an air of expectancy, of waiting for something to happen.

The sweat dripped into Tring's eyes and he wiped his forehead. He watched the little beads collecting on the back of his hand resting on the side of the car.

Outwardly the city pursued its everyday life. The usual smells rose in the still air — the smells of onion and garlic, of cardamons and turmeric, of ghi melting in the heat, and of heavy fat-fried foods. Underneath the surface there was something tense — the crowds moved faster and more warily. Shops were shuttered and closed which should be doing business. In the cloth bazaar hardly a stall was open.

Tring looked covertly at Mr. Khan Mahomed. His face was impassive,

but Tring happened to look down and saw that his fingers twitched a little. It annoyed him. Why should Khan Mahomed's hand twitch? If anyone's twitched, it should be his.

Far off in the distance they heard the sound of music — the clash of cymbals, the screech of pipes, and the deep braying of a conch. The police orderly stirred. The car stopped and the driver looked round for orders.

The crowds in the streets were listening, too. On a Mohammedan festival like Bakr'Id, a Hindu band — the sign of some kind of religious function — might start anything. Mohammedans don't play music and don't approve of it, and a Hindu band playing music would mean a disturbance of the faithful at prayer and an insult of the most deliberate kind, to be answered only with blows. In any case the playing of music in the city on Bakr'Id had been strictly forbidden.

Mr. Khan Mahomed looked at Tring for orders. The crowds in the bazaar were on the run.

'Go on,' said Tring, affecting a calm he did not feel. The car started with a jerk and turned down a side street.

'Hurry,' said Tring.

III

So it had come. At least it was what they had all expected. The crowd was moving with them with unanimous determination. At the street sides shutters were going up and men tied their loin cloths between their thighs.

Tring looked round him in curiosity, watching to see how Iruporei accepted the challenge. Nearer the band blared its discordant notes. The cymbals, beating a quick rhythm, were stirring the mob to action.

They left the car in a narrow lane and on foot came out on to a broad thoroughfare. Down the centre of it

marched the band with banners waving bravely. In the middle of it swayed a flower-garlanded litter borne shoulder-high in which was the black waxen figure of Kali, the 'Dark Mother.' Four-armed, her eyes and palms were red, her tongue, face, and breasts bloodstained.

At the top end of the street was the mosque, and from it were pouring the worshipers, enraged at the disturbance of their prayers. In between, the street was empty, and the higher buildings on either side presented nothing but blank shuttered windows.

The three of them — Tring, Khan Mahomed, and the police orderly — found themselves alone in the empty middle of the street. Before them the waving banners and the crowd swaying round the litter steadily advanced. The crash of the cymbals, the hoarse bray of the conches, and the squeaking of the pipes almost drowned the deep angry murmur of the crowd behind.

Tring took in the situation. He had expected trouble, but nothing so deliberately planned as this. He turned to the Police Superintendent.

'Send your orderly to the Temple thana for police. Keep them in the side streets until we want them.'

The orderly ran off, his feet paddling in the deep white dust. He stripped off his shoes as he passed the car that he might run the faster.

Tring advanced toward the band. The crowd halted uncertainly. The band stopped short in its playing, a cymbal in the zealous hands of a rear-rank player clanging brassily for several clashy beats after the rest. The deep-throated 'Aah' of the angry crowd behind him swelled crescendo. It sent a shiver down Tring's spine. Mass anger was something new to him — it seemed inhuman, it was so uncontrolled.

The empty space in the street was smaller. '*Divide et impera*,' said Tring

under his breath as he walked forward alone through the air stifling and still in the hot sunshine.

'We take our Mother Kali to see the shrine behind the mosque,' they said in answer to his question.

'Forward, brothers!' shouted a solitary voice near the litter. 'They are only two — we are many. Forward!' The mob moved uncertainly.

'Go back!' shouted Tring. 'There is to be no going forward to-day, and no playing of music. Are you children to do this to-day? Go back! It is an order.'

'Forward, brothers!' The same voice at the back cried monotonously. 'Forward, or our Mother Kali will be angry with us!'

Behind him, Tring heard a slight creak of leather. Khan Mahomed's hand was easing the butt of his revolver in its holster.

'They are in ugly moods, sir,' he whispered rapidly, his thin lips drawn back from his teeth as he spoke. 'We can do nothing. We are but two. Shall I fire?'

Tring shivered. The responsibility was his. A doubt came into his mind. Was Khan Mahomed really impartial? Or would he like to see his brethren from the mosque fling themselves in religious fury on their enemies in front?

'Leave your revolver where it is,' said Tring. 'There is to be no shooting.'

Behind them the roar of the surging mob in front of the mosque swelled to a shout. The mullah, in the green turban of one who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, was haranguing them from the steps of the building.

The empty space narrowed between the swaying mobs. They only awaited a false gesture to be at each other's throats. Anything might start it. There would be days of bloodshed and murder — of Iruporei out of hand — of looting and knifing in the dark at

street corners — of the settlement of private wrongs. A trickle of sweat crept into Tring's eyes, blinding him for a moment.

'Silence!' he shouted. 'Silence!'

He strove to make himself heard. Behind him Khan Mahomed echoed him with the bellow, 'Silence, you! Silence! The Sahib is going to speak.'

Behind him the roar of the angry Mohammedan crowd died away to a mutter; before him the Hindus pushed and shuffled uncertainly. The same voice near the litter of the goddess reiterated monotonously, 'Forward, brothers, forward!'

'Silence!' Tring repeated. At last he felt that he was making himself heard. Once he could do that, the game was his. He could drive his wedge of police between them. He only wanted time. 'Silence!' he shouted again.

Without warning a stone buzzed past his ear, and the clamor broke out again. From behind came more stones and then a bottle. Tring heard Khan Mahomed grunt. A brick had taken him in the small of the back. He was on his knees and bent double, retching. His vomit made a muddy puddle at his feet. He was tugging at the revolver in his holster.

Tring ran to him. Overhead the bricks and stones were flying. The roar of both crowds swelled again. To Tring it seemed that the thing had got beyond control.

A bottle broke at his feet and the broken glass reflected the burning sun. A stone sang through the air and struck Tring on the cheek below the eye. He staggered and put his hand to the place, which was curiously numb. There was blood, sticky and warm, on his fingers. The thing had got beyond him. They could do no more. The two mobs were brandishing axes and sticks which had appeared like magic.

Tring looked round. So this was what it felt like at the end — at the end of six months' work trying to make people see sense. And now? And now was the end. They could do no more. Let the thing start — and clean up as best they could later. His world was crashing round his ears. It was unreal, though just what he had expected for months. He had better get out; a sense of his own danger came over him and put him into sudden panic.

He bent to put an arm round Khan Mahomed and a trickle of blood ran into the corner of his mouth. He savored it on his tongue. It was warm and salty to his taste and curiously refreshing.

With the taste came anger, sudden and gusty. He dragged Khan Mahomed's revolver from its holster and faced the crowds again, and as he did so the battle closed.

Tring stood with Khan Mahomed, still retching, between his feet and hit out with his fist at anyone who came near. The sticks were rising and falling like flails. A man naked but for a loin cloth struck at the Police Superintendent with an axe, and Tring fired at him blindly. The man dropped, choking — blood coming from between his clenched teeth.

The litter bearing the goddess swayed and plunged uncertainly, and round it the battle was heaviest. Tring fought all in sight with a cold berserk rage and cleared a space round him. As he beat about him the Police Superintendent got to his feet and joined him in keeping their circle clear.

As they struck out they saw red turbans of their police appear at the side street through which they themselves had come. Tring fought toward them. At their head was the chubby little Hindu subinspector.

'Divide and rule!' shouted Tring into his ear.

'What?' said the subinspector, puzzled. 'I think, sir, maybe we will make splits of the factions and send them down side streets helter-skelters.'

The police drove into the milling mob in the confined street. Tring joined them; he wanted nothing better than to make some settlement for his last six months' work.

'Divide and rule!' he yelled as isolated bunches were detached and driven into the lanes and alleys — where, away from the battle, they halted for breath.

At last it was done. The street was clear, and for the moment things were quiet. The roadway was littered with stones, broken bottles, and torn clothing. The police were picking up the wounded. Tring, standing on the steps of a house, felt very tired. He sat down. His head was aching. He looked at his watch. Barely an hour before, he had left his house.

Tring picked himself up and called his car. His head buzzed and ached. He wondered what the casualties had been. Gingerly he fingered the cut below his eye. It was becoming painful, and the drying blood on his cheek cracked and flaked when he spoke. He drove home.

On the table in his study was his mail. He picked up one envelope after another and sorted them. The most interesting he took first. His application for a week's leave had been refused. Everything, then, was as usual.

Tring ripped the cover of the next letter. It was from the *Modern World*. They accepted gladly his article 'Vox Populi Vox Dei.' Unnoticed from the envelope fell a check. It skittered across the floor at each puff of the punkah. At last it would come to rest under the lee of the desk.

DROUGHT

BY ELEANOR RISLEY

I

ONCE more Spring is calling, 'Step up, gentlemen, and place your bets.' And we advance behind our ploughs with, perhaps, a step less assured than that of last year, when Nature won all the bets.

Even the ponies and I do not amble twice a week to the village with as light an amble, for eggs are ten cents now, when they were twenty-five cents this time last year.

Last spring I used to stop to watch Joey — eighteen, and married — following the mules proudly up and down the furrows, while his child-wife ran about in the field picking rocks and carrying them to the stone wall, reminding one, in her ragged red sweater, of a spring robin hopping about and running with an early worm. How many weary years of rock picking in that field! And still the rocks spring like dragons' teeth from the land.

There are four farms on my road to the village. Joey's, the Turleys', — two bachelor brothers who live opposite each other, — and last, Jimmy Reed's. Jimmy lives with his mother and his young wife at the foot of the steep Reed hill where I always rest the ponies beside the busy, crystal-clear stream and watch Jimmy and his wife working in the wide, clean fields where later the cotton will bloom. We wave at each other happily, for the season is propitious, and it is spring.

At the ford I watch warily for the little island. If it is submerged, I dare

not trust the swift waters from the mountains, but must turn to the longer road, where the crossing is safe. But to-day the pussy willows sway above the island, so the ponies drink their fill of the water they like best, and John, after his swim, visits, as he always does, the little mossy dens along the bank. For hope springs eternal that one great day he may come upon the 'varmint' which he knows hides there at night.

Among the green pines the dogwood stars, ineffably pure, white, like moonlight on snow, and across Tom Turley's pasture, against the azure sky, a long line of blushing redbuds. Beyond, old Rich Mountain, clothed in purple, benignant and mighty. Then comes the flower-bordered curve in the road that ever satisfies my soul, and I call John, who reluctantly abandons the hawk high in the tree, at which he barks defiance. For there is now no bounty on chicken hawks, and Arkansas expects every dog to do his duty.

From his accustomed stump John jumps into the cart. We are approaching the highway that leads to our county seat, and John, who has never learned to fear anything, might pause in the middle of the road to scratch his ear before a passing motor car, certain that it would stop for him.

Up the long, steep hill, where I rest the ponies and gaze at the sky, bluer from this depth, and smile that the mistletoe on the hardwood trees that slope south to the Ouachita River still

grows too high for holiday fears. And I look with a passing sadness at the churchyard with its remembered dead, and our little church on the summit of the hill. Around the curve, and there is the village, and Billy at his shop is shoeing a patient horse, or gazing thoughtfully at a grief-stricken motor car.

There are five houses in the village, and two small stores. If you fail to find what you desire in one, the storekeeper says, 'I kinder think the other store's got some o' thet ter-day.'

In the farther store the postmaster sits on a nail keg before the little cage which is our post-office department, bent on improving his mind with a book. For all the farmers are busy now, and the precious checkerboard lies idle and neglected on an adjacent flour sack. I receive my mail, and select another nail keg beside the postmaster and read aloud portions of my letters which may interest him. For the postmaster is my friend and confidant. He will say proudly, 'Here's one from the lady in New York. And here's one I do believe's got a check in it!'

II

Summer — and the little Robin and Joey, chopping cotton, look up wearily from their persistent, never-resting hoes. But Joey calls hopefully: —

'Hit 'pears now lak it might be weatherin' ter-morrer.'

But each day the clouds gather high in the sky, and, after a conference, disperse and vanish into thin air, and once more the sun sinks rose and gold behind the violet mountains. The days that follow are not hot days. The fields are not scorched by the sun alone. The corn and the cotton simply die of thirst. I note, in passing, that Tom Turley has moved his bed into the yard by the dusty crape-myrtle tree, for never have

the stars, it seems to me, shone down upon us with such pitiless brilliancy.

Then one day, as I pass, Joey says, 'No'm, hit would n't do no good now effen it did rain. The corn hit dried up in ther tossle before it could make; an' ther cotton suares they fell off, an' them would set won't make now.'

Jimmy Reed sits idle with his drooping young wife among the withered rosebushes in the yard, and looks across to the burned fields that represent so many days of toil for them both, and so many dollars for fertilizer which was to be paid for from the cotton. He greets me as gallantly as ever, but when I turn again from the stream to call John, passing the compliments of the season with the hounds, I catch a look on Jimmy's young face that I wish I might forget.

Then one day when the dust is deep, and the rocks in the road seem to have grown and sharpened; when the ponies no longer pause to stand and pretend to drink long after they have finished of the cool mountain water, but plod disconsolately through the revealing waste that was our beautiful ford; when the oaks stand brown and desolate, marked for death among the haughty pines, and the ground is strewn with withered leaves as if already winter were here, I reproach myself, in this barren land where no bird sings, for my joy in the encircling mountains — splendid, gigantic bouquets of softest browns and deepest maroon, and scarlet and green and shining gold. Tom Turley waits at his gate and stops me, — it is the twelfth of August, — and leans on the wheel of the cart, and looks at me with a white face.

'I thought I'd jist break hit ter you kinder — before you git ter town. The bank — hit failed yesterday. The one where yore money is — and where all our school money is.'

Tom commends me for the way in which I bear the shock. Since I am a 'furrin womern,' he had not expected the stoicism of a mountaineer. But the school money! That is incredible! How many anxious conferences we have held at our own little schoolhouse at my corner in an endeavor to resign ourselves to the mandate which had gone forth for a consolidated school at the village. We know that we might have better teachers there, and more time given to smaller classes, and it might be well enough for the elder pupils, though 'hit'll be mighty hard fur ther womern ter git th'u 'ith ther work in ther ev'nin' 'ithout 'em — bein' so late on ther road.' But the little ones, who must be snatched from a breakfast at dawn, who must walk to our old schoolhouse, deserted and cold, and wait for a dangerous-looking bus to bear them away until nightfall, — for we cannot afford another bus at once, and the road is long and must be repaired, too, — 'thim leetle fellers thet hain't niver ben nowhere a-tall!' Who will care for them, swinging away in that rocking machine?

Then, too, we feel that we shall be standardized — we shall lose our individuality. No more will there be a community centre at our own schoolhouse, where we hold our pie suppers, and exhibitions, and our Christmas tree celebrations. The village will swallow us. After all our agony of resistance, and our final resignation, now the money for the new stone schoolhouse at the village, — our one consolation, — the money is lost!

At the village are sober faces. 'Frozen securities,' sighs the postmaster.

'Thet means us, I reckon,' grins Barton, looking up from a brilliant move of a checker-man.

'Finish the game,' I say to the postmaster. 'I am in no hurry for the mail.'

I never have had the heart to interrupt a game.

An onlooker cries: 'He's finished, right now! Thet move o' Barton's finished him.'

Later, at the bank in town with my friend the newspaper man, I watch the long line of those who have responded to the bank's call for debts. Women in faded print gowns, with pained faces and trembling hands; men in patched overalls, their heads held high. They are facing, not our genial bankers, but a stranger, arrogant of manner, with a cold, set face — perhaps from poring over frozen securities.

A neighbor tells me that at another bank, where there is an unwonted air of anxiety and mystery, a man stands at the window with his 'cotton money' for the fertilizer bill, and asks for enough deducted to buy his wife and children winter shoes. He is refused. Banks must be wary now. Who knows when a run may start? Another asks for money enough from the first bales to purchase groceries. He is refused. He cries desperately: —

'All right! Thar's three more bales out ther to pick, and if you want 'em just go out and pick 'em!'

Still, we feel that these bankers have been our friends for years, and we are patient, and we speak with pride of the banker whose thirty-nine banks in our state failed in one week and who surrendered his own private fortune in gilt-edged securities and went back to the little home town to begin over again. But we wonder a little about banking laws, and why they do not protect depositors.

In the store next door I wait for the clerk whom I know and like. He is engaged with a man, evidently a laborer, who wears a faded shirt and no coat, though the day is chill and raw. Beside him stand two children with the remnants of shoes on their little feet.

The man counts aloud the silver in his hand. 'One dollar and twenty-nine cints.'

'All right,' says young George crisply. 'One sack of flour, twenty-four pounds — sixty cents. Beans — thirty-five cents. We have n't the lard in bulk. You'll have to get a five-pound bucket — forty-five cents.'

'Wait. Hold on a minute.' And the man anxiously counts the money in his hand once more. 'I hain't got enough. You see, I got ter git er can er snuff, too.'

'Well,' says George helpfully, 'then get a few less beans — and cut out the snuff! You don't need the snuff — you can't eat snuff.'

The man shakes his head sadly.

'I cain't leave out ther snuff,' he says.

'You are n't like me,' cries George, in his superior, youthful wisdom. 'I don't use tobacco myself. I can't afford it.'

'Suppose you don't, George!' I say impertinently. 'What has that to do with it? Of course he can't leave out the snuff!'

The man turns to me and murmurs, 'Hit's ter pleasure my womern. She's purty puny this winter.'

Alas, the standard of living among our workmen is too high; and ten cents is too much for 'pleasurin' an invalid.'

III

This was the beginning. Our county seat, a town of about thirty-five hundred, comes bravely to the rescue. 'Home money for the hungry at home' is the slogan.

Our county newspaper, of which we are so proud, the Chamber of Commerce, the various clubs, are active. A store in a vacant building — donated, with lights, heat, and water — receives gifts from the merchants and from the

Red Cross, food, clothing, and shoes. A cobbler advertises to mend all shoes free of charge, and a truck driver offers to collect all donations from individuals. We boast that we are one of the five counties of Arkansas that do not accept financial aid from the Red Cross. Mercifully the winter is mild, but sometimes in the mountains our spring is tardy and cold — however, there is the Red Cross, ready to help.

Later, at the village, I sit in my especial chair between the big vinegar barrel and the medicine shelf, with its boxes of salve for flu and its bottles of tonic for chills. I listen to the conversation in silence and pride; for great patience and what diplomacy I possess have earned me, a woman, the right to a seat in the Wisdom Club beside the sacred, eternal checker game.

The talk is of our new stone schoolhouse in the village, for the county treasurer held a surety bond for forty thousand dollars which partially covered the public money. Then, in November, the closed bank paid the depositors twenty-five cents on the dollar, and promised more when the money could be collected. We shake our heads dubiously about the time this will take — with fertilizer at the same ruinous price. And we estimate and compute, and guess that the fertilizer bill takes about half of the cotton crop of our county!

But our beautiful schoolhouse grows each day, though the building has been delayed and our school is held in the church on the hill; for we must be kept firmly to a consolidated school. We reluctantly admit how fresh and well our children look, in spite of an unusually low diet — in other townships there are soup kitchens for the school children, but not in ours! Some of us reflect that we may thank the new bus, with its merry rides till dark instead of hurried work at home after school.

There was the usual Christmas celebration at the church, and though we knew that the programme far exceeded anything we ever gave at Piney Hill schoolhouse, yet somehow it was not the same, and perhaps we were a trifle lonely, and not yet reconciled. But our girls were beautiful, — cotton stockings this year in place of rayon or silk, — their finely cut features and their delicate complexions heightened by rouge. (We have each, for a long time, possessed a pair of silk stockings for Sunday, and long since we have attained to cosmetic consciousness.) There was much display of bright Christmas paper to cover the paucity of gifts.

Later my friend Jack, who works in town, but loves a country lass, said to me: —

‘I just thort I’d ask you. I give my girl a mighty nice pair o’ shoes fur a birthday present. She did n’t wear ’em an’ I found out the pore girl did n’t hev no stockings. So I goes an’ putts a pair on the tree fur her. She’s mad, an’ don’t want to take ’em. She lows hit ain’ no nice present ter give a girl. I told her I knowed it wuz, an’ I wuz goin’ ter ask you. Effen it don’t miss-putt you none, you just tell her so, will you? Hit’s all right, hain’t it?’

‘Of course. It is the usual gift nowadays,’ I answered, and I wondered why anyone should consider stockings a more indelicate gift than shoes. Still, one must draw the line somewhere, and while our mountain girls are pliant as to short dresses, bobbed hair, and cosmetics, they are rigid as to their own ideas of propriety.

In these parlous times we felt that on Christmas Day we belonged with our own. Refusing invitations to the town or to Commonwealth College beyond, we dined with our nearest neighbors, and had backbone and turnips as the *pièce de résistance*, and precious canned

peaches from the year before last for dessert. We were enabled to take some oranges — a gift to us from Florida — and the first grapefruit they had ever seen. Our host said sadly: —

‘Commonly we have oranges for Christmas — but not this year.’

It was a good dinner; and afterward we sat about the fire in the clean, carpetless little room where the picture of the Father of our Country, tacked on the wall, looked sternly down upon us; and some of us took snuff, and some of us smoked pipes, and some of us ‘rolled our own’ of our home-grown tobacco, and we talked of Congress, and of the Red Cross, and of Farm Relief, and marveled that, while all wished to help us, there seemed no way of agreeing on a plan before we were past assistance, and must starve or riot as some of our sister counties. And we sniffed contemptuously at the prevalent advice that we plant next year ‘only what we need to eat, and sell the surplus.’

‘Who to?’ asked Williams. ‘Who’ll we sell it to? Why, one farmer’s beans hes ben knowed to glut the market in town; and we ain’t got no means o’ transportation. I give away all but the first load o’ my watermelons last summer.’

And we all agree that while that might be sound advice when a farmer made his own shoes, and his own clothes, and his own medicine from herbs, yet, if cotton made at all, it was a cash crop and would bring in a little money for shoes and clothes, and medicines.

We look up at the picture of George Washington, and repeat that we love our country, but perhaps we draw a sharp line between our country and ‘ther gov’mint.’ And we speak in hushed voices of the renters in the most fertile counties in the state who to-day eat the salt bread of strangers.

IV

But Christmas, with its ephemeral good cheer, has passed and we are now in the winter of our discontent. I sit behind the stove at the post office, with the assembled Wisdom Club.

'Thar's a heap o' unemploymint,' says Ross, looking up from his newspaper. 'A piece hyar in ther paper says a revolution is a-comin'.'

'Yeah,' says Barton, 'an' hit's us communists in Arkansas (I don't low 'iny o' us iver seed one — I would n't know one effen I met hit in ther road) is whisperin' round an' makin' ther banks bust. Ther won't be no revolution — not in these-hyar United States. Whut'll happen is thim thet's hed a pair o' Sunday overhalls, they'll jist hev one pair now, an' thim thet's et three aigs fur breakfast'll jist eat one — or none. Wheat so cheap they burn hit out West, an' bread hit's kim down one cint! Me, I take a bushel o' wheat an' hev it ground at ther mill — an' he takes toll fur hit. It's black-lookin', but a feller keeps a-workin' on it. Naw, we'll jist go on an' git used ter hit — an' purty soon we'll forgit it was n't allers lak thet.'

'Take heart,' grins Patton, 'I kim in ter pay ye yore rint. Hyar 't is.'

'Aw, ye need n't be in no hurry, Joe. Mebby we orter figger er leetle more on ther fertilizer bill.'

'Uh-huh. I'm 'bout through figgerin' thet fertilizer bill. Hyar 't is. One dollar an' fifty-four cints.'

There is a general grin — we do not laugh easily in the mountains — and Mr. Perry says: —

'You're in luck, Barton. I thought I had sixteen dollars rent, but I had forgotten my share of the fertilizer bill. Looks now as if I'm out seventy cents.'

'Hilton,' says another, 'he's got three tinants over in ther Hilton sittlemint. One of 'em kim out even,

tother give him three cints, an' tother one lift him three cints in ther hole.'

The postmaster comes from helping our carrier sort the mail and seats himself opposite our champion checker player, bent on refreshing himself from his recent labor.

'It's you landed proprietors that make all the trouble,' he says, 'though you do give a renter a garden spot here. Now up there where the poor fellows are rioting for food it's the best land in the state, but the renter is not allowed to raise anything for himself. I can remember when he was not permitted to raise even a chicken. So when the cotton fails, where is he? We need n't holler. Most of us own our own farms, — such as they are, — and we've got plenty of wood to burn. We won't riot — unless the spring comes late. Bread lines in the cities, and right over in Oklahoma the children running after cars and begging for something to eat. We'll pull through — for a while, anyway.'

'Yeah,' says Tom Turley, 'we'll come through. The papers say hit's jist a transition period we're goin' through. Jist transition.'

'Transition?' asks Barton vaguely.

'He means changing from one thing to another,' answers the postmaster. 'I suppose life would n't go on at all without transition.'

'Uh-huh. I transitioned frum corn to Bermudy grass an' cows last year. Butter fat kims down to fifteen cints, — lowest usered ter be twinty-five, — an' yisterday I wuz offered four dollars fur my two half-growed Jersey calves. I low my transition hain't a-goin' ter help much.'

'I was speakin' mainly about unemploymint,' says Tom. 'Hit'll pass.'

Billy, from his shop, posts a letter and strides down to the Wisdom Club.

'Unemployment pass! Why, it's a world condition, man! It'll not pass

until we learn to digest our machines. Mass production is all right, but the people will have to own the machines. What we've got to do is to digest the machines.'

There is an uneasy silence. Then Barton drawls: 'I don't know 'bout my digestin' er machine. Mebby I could do hit. I've been managin' ter digest ground-up wheat an' hawg meat, tryin' to stave off pellagry till poke-sallet time in ther spring; but I'd kinder hate ter tackle a machine jist now. Did ye-all hyar thet Collins down by the river died o' pellagry last week?'

'No, but we knew he war down 'ith it.'

'But, Billy,' I say timidly, — for well I know that I am in double jeopardy, at once from the strength of Billy's argument and again from an appearance of 'big talk' which may cost me my hard-earned membership in the club, — 'could n't we learn to digest the machines in the home, and give over mass production?'

'What do you want to go backwards for, woman? Mass production frees us from all kinds of drudgery. What do you want it in the home for?'

'Maybe to preserve the home,' I murmur, as I rise to go.

'Home!' cries the postmaster then. 'Where are homes, anyway? We just have automobiles — and Billy to mend them.'

I wait a moment as our largest landed proprietor seats himself on a nail keg.

Barton greets him with a grin. 'Hev ye asked fur help yit?'

'No, but I reckon I will before summer.'

'Ye got to swear ye hain't got no credit.'

'I'd like for someone to prove I got credit,' he answers, with a sly glance at the postmaster. 'Besides, to git help yer neighbors has got to come in and swear ye ain't got nothin' to eat before

ye can git anything. Me — I ain't popular enough with my neighbors to risk it. Though before we're out of this I reckon we'll all swear one another through.'

The other storekeeper, finding things dull at his store, wanders down. 'The school-teacher, she says some o' the chillern ain't got shoes, ner much to eat, an' Gray down by the river — he's plumb outern everything. He's —'

But there is a hush as Gray walks down to the medicine shelf and buys two bottles of chill tonic — on credit.

'Folks sick?' asks Barton sympathetically.

'Yeah. Water low all summer an' hed ter drink crick water. Hit ain't typhoid, though. Jist fever 'n' ager. Thompson's folks is all down 'ith ther typhoid.'

At the door I turn back, having forgotten my egg money. A young man whom I do not know speaks to the postmaster, who answers him in a low tone.

'Yes, hit's so. I wuz a long time payin' up last time. But ther town hes promised me road work, an' I'll pay up with my first money. Besides,' and he leans across the counter and cries hoarsely, 'I just got ter hev flour an' lard! I caint let my womern an' chillern starve, kin I?'

'No, you can't,' says the postmaster. 'Make out your list.'

When the man has gone with his groceries the postmaster sighs: 'Times are hard. He'll never be able to pay. No crop. Big fertilizer bill. Sick wife. It's a queer world. They have all been telling us that we spend too much on foolish pleasures. I spent for Wells's *Outline of History*, and had to give up the only magazine I took — they were my foolish pleasure. Now they tell us to spend, spend! I've waited ten years for a good cellar. I'm building one now. After all, the money is safer in a cellar than in a bank.'

V

As I drive home through the silence of the stately pines, the gaunt cows, worn to the bone, have scarce the energy to move out of our way. John does not bark at them, but turns away his head from delicacy, for an emaciated cow is a grotesque object. A starved horse retains his noble personality to the last. From his long, accusing head to his bedraggled tail he is still a pathetic but an integral personality. But a starved cow divides herself into aliquot parts. All the life in her body gathers into her pleading eyes, and below her neck the poor animal seems to drag about an ungainly, discarded piece of furniture for which she has no use. O spring, come! Quick! Quick!

At home, resolved to do my bit, I take from the machine drawer the chicken money that escaped the bank, and count it carefully. I shall begin my long-coveted rock chimney and fireplace and provide one Collie, eighteen and married a year, with work. As to the rocks on my thirty acres, 'we ain't got nothin' else but.'

Collie sets blithely to work hauling rock, and as he mixes cement he talks incessantly and rapturously of his 'houn'.

'My daddy-in-law's houn' is named Broke, so I named mine Benton, an' call him Bent. Bent and Broke. See? I reckon thar ain't no houn' in this country kin tech Bent, whin I git him trained. He's, ye might say, jist a pup now. We could hev got er place ter stay this winter an' help eround, but the feller would n't let me keep my houn'. Said he et too much. Why, I kin make more real money a-sellin' possum hides thin I could er made thar all winter.

'Possum hides is might' low now, though. I jist git fifteen cints — er at most six bits — fur ther best,

whar I used ter git two and a half fur a plumb good possum hide. But Bent'll shore git 'em! I'll bet Bent agin iny houn' in this county!'

Then one morning Collie appears, silent and spiritless. In the afternoon he speaks suddenly, in a low, dead voice: 'I lost my houn'.'

'What! Not Bent! Did he die?'

'No'm. Ye see, whin I got married I borrowed the money fur hit. I owed the bank fur fertilizer, an' I did n't make no crop, an' I could n't git round ter payin' ther feller thet lent me ther money ter marry on. Last night he kim over 'n' took my houn'. He did n't give me even the goin' price. But my daddy-in-law's goin' ter git me another ter-day. Hit's blind, but it kin tree possums. I bet whin I git th'u 'ith him he'll be ther best houn' in the county.'

Poor Collie! I had chosen him for my work because he had few affiliations, lived with his father-in-law, a renter and a 'furriner,' and belonged to no clan. It was a long time before I could trace the ramifications of our mountain clans, and thus avoid gauche moments in a casual conversation. The clans are of the aristocrats — the old settlers. Beyond my north fence, in the same house, live four generations. The great-grandmother, aged one hundred and three, the other day administered a sound slap to her great-grandson, a grown man six feet tall, because he rearranged the chairs at the fireside. The man told me this with a proper pride in his great-grandmother's qualifications.

The grandfather said to me one day, 'I don't like ther looks er things round my place. Thar's tracks round about thet I don't even recognize.'

'Do you know all our tracks?' I asked in amazement.

'Yeas'm, I low I do. Leastwise the folks thet live hyar, an' in ther moun-

tings back thar. Course I kinder expect tracks, fur the fellers thet is cotched fur makin' liquor go past my place ter git ter ther reservation an' hide erwhile. But effen thar's iny thar they'll hev ter kim down. Thar hain't nothin' like thar commonly is ter eat this y'ar in ther mountings.'

My neighbor has been a mighty hunter in his day, and there are still others like him in our neighborhood. I fancy these men would never riot for food, though they might demand.

I have not forgotten how, at our last school meeting, though there was some difference of opinion, and some bitterness, in the belief that we had been gerrymandered in the apportionment, there was no chairman, and there was ominous quiet. The county superintendent of schools, who was but performing a duty, had sent us word that 'if we would treat him right' he would come this evening and speak to us. After a while we signed on the dotted line because we had to. But my neighbor who knows all tracks of man or beast, and who perhaps can neither read nor write, arose after the signing and, throwing back his fine old head like a deer, said with a slow dignity:—

'Afore ye leave we wants ye ter know that we know we hain't ben treated right. We hain't goin' ter make no trouble, because we cain't. But we wanted ye ter know hit.'

We love our country, but we are not awed by officials — even 'edicated town fellers.'

VI

The winter wears on. One Saturday — farmer's day — we drive into the town for one of our quarterly visits. The sun shines, but the day is chill. Never have I seen the sheltering mountains closer, bluer, more serene, and never has the air seemed sweeter

or more invigorating. As we rumble across the bridge of the Ouachita I look down at the clear green water that frets itself into white foam against the brown rocks below, and note with joy the faint, first signs of spring along its banks. Never has our county seat, with ivy clinging to the walls of our beautiful churches, with magnolia leaves glistening in our spacious park, and with its rich mosaic of native stone buildings, seemed to call a gladder welcome. But, though it is Saturday, the shops are deserted; only about the quarters of the Red Cross a crowd of men are assembled, and at the Chamber of Commerce a group of women, and a secretary filing applications for government loans.

I thread my way to the counter at the Red Cross store, where my friend the newspaper man, who has given every ounce of his strength to the cause of caring for our own people, stands wan and discouraged.

'Spring is on the way,' I say. 'Are n't we about through?'

He smiles — a trifle bitterly.

'We are about through, but I'm afraid they are not. I guess we may have to give up and ask financial aid of the Red Cross at last. We are now the last county in Arkansas that has not asked for help. We have cared for about two thousand and two hundred county families, and we have two hundred and eighty-five on the list in town.'

'But why not ask for aid?' I say stupidly. 'Surely the town has done its part.'

'Well, yes. But our people are proud and self-respecting. They feel that when help comes from us it is assistance from their own people — why, we are many of us related to these county people in one way or another. Red Cross aid is necessarily a mathematical thing; you become, perforce,

a number on a list — not a human being.'

'I understand,' I say, ashamedly.

'We want to keep our people a united community. But I guess we are about through. It is not that we do not appreciate the Red Cross. They have sent us cars from Sidney, Nebraska, from Geneseo, Illinois, and from Aberdeen, Idaho. Potatoes, and corn, and food, and clothing, and canned goods, from private subscription, and the railroads! have deadheaded the cars to us. When a car comes in, the trucks thunder down to the station, and the whole town shouts! But the railroads are through now, too. Our people *must* have help for another two months at least. It's the timber workers, and the share croppers, and the renters, and, too, the farmers, who for some reason have exhausted their resources and their credit, that must be carried through. But I guess we'll have to have help. The merchants, and the country stores —'

'It's all very heartbreaking — and complicated,' I murmur, and accept two cans of cherries and strawberries from the Illinois car, and bear them proudly through the crowd that I may be seen to have accepted aid.

An old man comes in for his portion.

'Don't give me so much,' he says. 'Ther's others need it worse.'

Another, known to be on the verge of want, when asked if he wants help, replies, 'Hell no! Not so long's I kin crawl.'

For we are of pioneer stock, and charity, or even 'gov'mint aid,' is bitter medicine.

It is still too early for pussy willows

at the ford, and the windflowers and violets have not come. But wan little shoots push up timidly, reluctant to leave the earth for a strange new world. The swift waters from the mountains may bear some of them away, some may wither in the hot little fists of children, some may live to flaunt the summer through, but Nature will take them all home. Not one can fall outside Nature. Neither can we — patient hillbillies of the Ouachitas.

Tom Turley leaves his plough to speak to me. I look across at his new barn. His old one burned in the winter, with all his precious oats. We held two 'workin's,' and his neighbor, with whom he had quarreled six years ago, — we are slow to forgive in the mountains, — came to the 'work-in's' both days. If our great American satirist writes that 'God made Arkansas for the butt of ridicule,' we may remind him with the gentle Wordsworth that 'we have powers that he knows not of.'

Is it that, when Nature, indifferent, or obeying the malice of strange gods, deserts us, there springs up a spiritual compensation that brings kinder hearts and wider sympathies?

'Yes'm,' Tom calls, 'ther mules, an' all of us, is purty ganted up; but ef my shoes an' overhalls'll last out till grass, we'll all make it.'

For it is spring, and who knows that the cotton may not escape the drought, and the army worm, and the boll weevil, and the fertilizer bill, and that next fall possums may not be firm again?

It is spring. Step up, gentlemen, and place your bets.

NOBODY'S BUSINESS

BY GEORGE J. ANDERSON

I

By common repute, the management of American business has hitherto been credited with policies of farsighted and progressive action. If it is to merit that reputation in the present situation of industry, it will do well to face, squarely and without illusions, three conspicuous facts.

The first is psychological. Management is confronted by a public state of mind that is, generally speaking, more critical about the present control of industry, more anxious about its future conduct, than it has been for many years.

The second is economic. Our recent setback to prosperous advance represents no mere bend in the business road, but a genuine turning point, indicating a sharp change in direction and a real upgrade.

The third is ethical. To surmount the difficulties of a new industrial epoch, old motives and old driving power are clearly becoming inadequate. They need not, indeed they cannot, be entirely abandoned. But they can, and indeed they must, be coupled with a far larger measure of moral force than has yet been applied.

For the management of our industries to ignore the influence of these things, or even to minimize them, is to risk further and greater failure. Public opinion, disillusioned by economic losses and left skeptical of economic remedies, will obviously demand results somewhere. At the least, it may be con-

tent with the awkward repairs of politics. At the worst, it might accept the scrap values of violent change.

Under these conditions, industry cannot take so sharp a curve or make so steep a grade without both change of pace and change of gears.

If we fill in some details of these several situations, it may help to form an intelligible pattern for future policy. In the premise of Lincoln, 'If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it.'

There is no reason for business management to resent the current trend of disillusionment, and every reason to try to comprehend it. In facing such a state of mind, the government of industry but repeats the history of the government of states. As the peoples emerge from the Great Depression, their reactions are not dissimilar to those with which they came out of the Great War. Upon the leaders of statecraft and upon the leaders of business is fixed the responsibility for the fact that these disasters, with all their attendant suffering, should happen at all. In a certain sense, the premiers of both agencies are held accountable to the commons.

Indeed, huge economic losses and widespread suffering, mental and physical, make the effects of depression direct kin, in the human sense, to those of war. Victims of the conflict between industries can no more draw subtle distinctions than can the victims of battle among nations. Both wars have

their carnage. To any sensitive mind, the slaughter of hopes and happiness, fringed with suicides, is nearly as appalling as the slaughter of humanity itself upon the battlefield. In both cases, too, helplessness to protect numbers of innocent noncombatants — women, children, and the aged — adds not only to the general misery but to the bitterness of the common soldier. Is it any wonder, then, that people ask why these things need be? That they demand policies and leaders of stature sufficient, if not wholly to prevent, at least greatly to allay the evil? To business the marvel should be, not the criticism, but its moderation.

The rebound of popular opinion is perhaps greater in the United States than elsewhere, for several reasons. Ours is not, like some of the older nations, an especially patient people. Because American management has in many respects achieved more, its public expects more. *Noblesse oblige*. Here, too, in the last decade, business self-conceit had reached fairly high levels. Conscious of its marked success and admitted progress, management has had, since the last great economic shock of 1921, not a little of 'the new era' attitude. Even old truths had passed away, and all industry had become new.

Reënforcing, perhaps stimulating, this state of mind was a period of official flattery almost unique in our political annals. One may safely hazard a guess as to the irony with which the future historian will compare the rain of government adulation in 'prosperity' with the drought of preparedness for the 'recession.' In retrospect, he will appraise, more easily and more justly, the extent to which the heart of industry was hardened and its moral fibre softened by these flatterers around the throne.

Meanwhile, let it not be forgotten

that management has paid its share of the penalty. The public is apt to believe that the controllers of industry, humanly speaking, enjoy a sort of immunity in time of depression. Quite the contrary. Inevitable burdens of anxiety and strain fall upon them in such a time which are grievous to be borne. They incur physical and mental punishment quite in line with the experience of their fellows. Furthermore, the effects and the memories of these great adjustments pursue management long after they have begun to fade in the public mind.

Justice to our business leaders, too, bids us observe their own reaction in the present instance. Both interesting and important is the sensitiveness, almost without precedent, with which they have responded to the crisis. In many communities, their approach to unemployment relief has been their most spontaneous and most intensive drive since the Liberty Loans. In point of fact, unemployment has emerged as the outstanding issue, frankly recognized as an indictment of our industrial system. The long lines of idle men, hollow-eyed with hunger, uncoated men shivering on cold streets, the appeals of families dispossessed — such islands of despair, actually surrounded by a sea of economic surplus, have symbolized the real future menace to industrial, not to say political, stability. Millions, workless but eager to labor, while machines are rusting and materials are wasted, have bared the tooth and claw in the 'law' of supply and demand. Not even a critical public can possibly feel this appalling paradox as does management.

If further evidence were required as to its general sense of accountability, this may be found in the traditional search for a scapegoat. As business begins to admit a certain share of guilt, it gropes for the obstacles to real stabil-

ity. Whether or no the national anti-trust laws will wholly fit the rôle, their current seizure for sacrifice hints at the mood of our high priests, official and financial. At least they are seeking a path, less encumbered by barriers, to a better industrial control.

In addition, the public should not forget another thing. While industry may appear equally confused in these economic disasters, business bewilderment is mixed with knowledge as well as with ignorance. It may not see any clearer how to go about an immediate solution, but it is, on the whole, better informed as to the complexity of the job. It comprehends the vast entanglement of forces which brings these unhappy things to pass. Furthermore, it is baffled by the manner in which lessons learned and remedies applied after one crisis seem actually to aggravate the next.

Let me cite one example. That the piling up of huge inventories and the wide accumulation of commodities, especially raw materials, were basic causes in the post-war crisis of 1920-1921 business was clear. New inventory and purchasing methods, adopted generally in these latter years, were characterized by so-called 'hand-to-mouth' buying. That this advance in policy materially helped to stabilize the processes of production is unquestioned. Yet the extreme to which this virtue has been applied in the recent depression has seemingly tended both to intensify its effects and to prolong its duration. Still, industry cannot afford to jettison so valuable a method of management.

II

As I have said, business is quite as much confused by its little knowledge as the public, or at least a goodly portion of it, may well be by its lack of information. During recent years,

especially, large increase in the facts and research about business cycles has at least made possible more intelligent thought by management. Nevertheless, its task is yet only begun. To illustrate the maze of causes which have engaged the analysts, consider merely this summary by Dr. Wesley C. Mitchell, one of our best authorities: —

Among the factors to which the leading rôle in causing business cycles has been assigned by competent inquirers within the past decade are the weather, the uncertainty which beclouds all plans that stretch into the future, the emotional aberrations to which business decisions are subject, the innovations characteristic of modern society, the 'progressive' character of our age, the magnitude of savings, the construction of industrial equipment, 'generalized overproduction,' the operations of banks, the flow of money incomes, and the conduct of business for profits. Each of these explanations merits attention from those who seek to understand business cycles; for each should throw light upon some feature or aspect of these complex phenomena.

Faced with these facts, the man in the street and the average manager may feel hopelessly lost together in their Cave of Adullam. Yet we must somehow start to seek an exit. I realize full well the risk in attempts to oversimplify an intricate puzzle. Certainly I make no claims to be an expert guide in such a labyrinth. It does seem plain, however, that management can make small progress in our great dilemma unless public opinion is far better clarified than it is; and further, that to enlighten the public mind it is essential both for the people at large and for management, which is after all only the public agent in industry, to agree upon principles, one at a time. The reasons, I trust, are obvious enough. The public must depend upon management for technique. Management, certainly when it moves beyond

the scope of single enterprises, must rely upon public support.

Doubtless it needs no debate for both management and the public to agree about depression, or the 'panic,' which is not merely unpleasant but reprehensible, calling not for relief but for removal. Are we willing to make the same resolve about the 'boom'? If we are unable or unready to adopt the same mental attitude toward the excesses of prosperity that we can and do take toward the havoc which ever grows directly out of them, how far have we gone? If we still wish to philander with the young siren, why turn so bitterly upon her when she grows into an old hag? The time to avoid trouble is before it starts. If and when we behold the boom for the ugly thing that it is, — uglier even than the panic by reason of being its cause, — then, and not till then, shall we be on our way. For they who sow the wind must expect to reap the whirlwind.

In the personal view, boom and panic are no new things. They are not exclusively a product of the Industrial Revolution. True, they altered their forms in the machine age, and their consequences have been vastly extended in an era of mass production. But the thinkers of mankind have noted their mental and moral aspects through the ages. 'Man knows not the lot appointed him,' remarked Virgil, 'and he cannot keep within bounds when elated with prosperity.'

In boom times, we have not only the poor always with us, but that element which believes that by sheer wit and speed it can outrun all laws of economics, of physics, of morals. Supply and demand, action and reaction, sowing and reaping, all alike are tossed into the discard. Mere exuberance alone has supposedly rendered them null and void. The boom is on!

Certainly for the last two centuries

or more, in which our business annals are fairly complete, these periodic depths of depression and suffering have been almost invariably foreshadowed by peaks of excess. From the days of Mississippi Bubble and South Sea Scheme down to the latest security madness, we have seen that the speculator 'cannot keep within bounds when elated with prosperity.' When it is not stocks and shares, it is commodities; and when commodities are not in fashion, it is land. Always the outcome seems to be the same. In the struggle to develop artificial values, the fight to stabilize real values is, for the time, defeated.

At least, however, we are on the threshold of discovering where the real issue lies. The case stands on the docket as *Speculation v. Stability*. As perhaps never before, the management of industry is convinced that it must choose whom it will serve, the speculator or the stabilizer. Quite definitely, business has reached a crossroads where the strait and narrow path cuts squarely across the broad highway.

I am aware of critics who will say that it is easier to indict the speculator than it is to convict him and put him under bonds to keep the business peace. I am not unmindful, also, of those who contend that even the speculator serves his purpose: as a brake, by selling while his fellows continue at top speed; as a propeller in reverse, to draw the stranded ship, by his buying, back into the channels of trade. And finally, even moderate dissenters will point out that all business, with its uncertain hopes and its necessary risks, is at bottom a form of speculation.

One may concede the essential bit of truth in each of these views. They do not, to my mind, greatly affect the present case against the speculator and

his offspring, the boom. As enterprises have grown larger and stronger and more stable, that factor of normal business risk which is in any sense akin to real speculation has grown less and less. So far as the speculator's services are concerned, if he himself would recognize any speed limits, his particular aid in bringing things to a pause would n't be necessary. His value as propulsion would be merely funny if the breakers around us were not filled with flotsam and jetsam from the wreckage of his own miscalculations. Consequently, when public opinion decides that he is a greatly overrated chap, both as a member of the economic crew and as a good fellow, I am quite confident he can be put in irons. For then his offense will be rated, not stupidity, as now, but mutiny.

In brief, our common task, the real job of both management and public, is not so much to find a cure for panics; it is to develop a preventive for booms. The evil thing we now mutually abhor is the quite natural penalty for the more evil thing we must jointly forswear. After debauch, the headache; after the joy ride, the crash! What we need to be concerned about is not headache powders, however potent, but moderate living; not repair crews, however skilled, but careful drivers.

To this extent, at least, we need a new definition of prosperity. Far too many of us consider the boom and prosperity to be synonymous. They are certainly not interchangeable, and, more emphatically, they are distinct periods in business and distinct states of mind. The repeated history of business cycles shows that we pass — quite unconsciously, perhaps, but actually, nevertheless — from one to the other. Prosperity, assured and stabilized, would be a permanent glow of health. Boom and panic are a fever followed by chills and ague.

III

With the curtain thus raised upon the business stage, perhaps we shall be better able to examine the rôle of management. Let us first try to visualize what we mean by 'management.' I use the term broadly to include that whole body of executive, technical, and supervisory skill which directs our industries. In numbers, of course, it is but a small minority. At least one qualified attempt to estimate the size of this group has recently been made. Some years ago, the National Industrial Conference Board, using the census data of 1920, placed the total at a million and a half persons. My readers may be interested in the formula then used, which will be seen to be fairly broad: —

Major officials, managers, superintendents, technical engineers, designers, draftsmen, inventors, architects, chemists, assayers, metallurgists, and auditors, together with one quarter of the number of foremen, overseers, and inspectors in agriculture, mining, construction, trade, transportation, and public service.

Within the scope of policy decision and control, or the strictly executive group, the number, of course, would be much delimited. Part of the public, as actual investors in American industry, have delegated their power, directly or indirectly, to these men as agents. The remainder are largely dependent upon these same men, if not directly under their jurisdiction, in the earning of a livelihood. But to management itself the thing is not quite so simple as three lads and a seesaw.

The more or less prevalent view of management, particularly of its executive ranks, is that it is monarch of all it surveys. For the true radical, this concept starts with the corporation as a big pyramid, based upon a helpless

army of hirelings and ranging upward through the various supervisory ranks, with, at the solitary peak, some unrestrained autocrat ruling by fiat. Even in more conservative minds, not especially interested or concerned with internal administration, the idea of industrial management as a slightly modified despotism clearly prevails. The average man assumes that in business the private will of the 'Boss' is the law, the whole law, and there is no law but the Boss!

Even in the days of the so-called 'one-man company,' such a picture was barely accurate. As a portrayal of the modern corporation to-day, it has not even the merit of good caricature.

Let us take a modern sample of business enterprise — any one of the hundreds of corporations sufficiently large or important to have their ownership shares listed on our exchanges. What is the workaday position of industrial management?

Clearly the first thing to observe is that the problem is really one of government. The primary and constant task is the reconciliation of contrary forces. The executive of industry, like the executive in government, must operate in the centre of conflicting interests. Figuratively, he sits in the centre of a round table, about which rise discordant voices and hostile views, the representatives of the diverse groups being seldom or never unanimous about the actual policies, methods, or results of management action. At best, the decisions of management are based upon the greatest good to the greatest number. At worst — well, management, like all other human agents, can make its big mistakes.

Now, in order to govern, — or to retain office and the power with which to govern, — management must form, either consciously or unconsciously, a coalition among the conflicting inter-

ests. Aware at the outset that it cannot satisfy all, it seeks to secure the support of as many as possible. More particularly, depending upon its philosophy of business, as is the case with the politician, it seeks to unite behind the administration those groups which, at that time and under those conditions, it deems especially important.

It should be understood, I trust, that this process is not cast permanently in any fixed mould. The business mind deals with constant change, and is by nature peculiarly specific in its thinking. Hence this plan of rough and ready coalition is subject to wide and frequent variation. But the manœuvre remains a fairly constant fact in operation.

Here is a roll call of these delegations who sit at the round table, facing management in its centre.

First is the investor group, in which — by theory, at any rate — the corporation has its origin. Its members supply the capital and the credit which make the company financially a going concern. There are the stockholders who own its shares, the bondholders who have purchased its mortgages, the bankers who not only have probably been a medium for distributing these securities but are a source of current loans for working capital. Occasions may and do arise when the interests of even this coherent group are somewhat divided as among holders of bonds, preferred stock, common stock, and open credit. On the whole, however, the demands upon management from the investor group and its obligations thereto centre about the fact of company earnings. Stability or enhancement of security values, safety for interest or increase of dividends — these are the planks of the investors' platform upon which management must stand to secure their support in the governing bloc. I scarcely need emphasize the developments of recent

years with regard to the vast increase in numbers of this group.

Now we come to the wage earners, that great rank and file of the industrial army. These are they who invest not their money but their lives, not surplus cash but flesh and blood. To modern management, the huge investment of humanity which it faces in the thousands of employees and their dependents is also a trusteeship. The quite obvious trend in business, based on widely different motives, is to take this trust more and more seriously. The demands upon management from labor are for work, steady and stabilized; for wages, adequate and protected; for hours that provide for leisure; for safety of life and limb, and sanitation for body and mind; and, binding these together by employment, as the cash investors' demand is bound up in earnings, for security. For a few, the force of labor demands is emphasized by an intermediary, the trade-union, as the bank supplements the investors. But, whether organized or not, the will of labor can be brought to the mind of management by the constant and costly drain of individual withdrawal. As requirements of efficiency and economy become more severe, industry will go far to include labor in its governing bloc and to avoid that vote of lack of confidence expressed in labor turnover.

Next we have the customers upon whom the enterprise relies for its revenues. Upon their good will depends the capacity of management to pay at all. It is from the proceeds of his customer relations that the manager obtains the wherewithal to satisfy investor and wage earner alike. In this sense, they are the most essential element in his bloc. No customers, no sales; no sales, no revenues; no revenues, no company! To make the problem more acute, the customers are the most

independent group of all. Their decision to withdraw from the coalition can usually be made with more speed, more ease, and less risk. Their demand upon management is for inducements; for better quality, for lower cost, for superior service. If a rival management can offer all, sometimes any, of these in its bid for support, this vital factor in government is lost to the executive. The customer's veto is final.

To capital and labor, to money and men, the producer must add materials and machines. The question of the supplier comes into view. Theoretically, management in its purchasing policies is as independent as any customer; yet circumstances alter cases. Relative bargaining strength between industries, the temporary balance of economic power, may be unfavorable. With his supplies as with his sales, the industrial executive must have dependability. If his army is to wage its business battles, the supply trains must move regularly from base to fighting front.

We turn now to what may be termed the Opposition. For our industrial statesman, like others before him, must not only look to his supporters, but must keep a watchful eye in front. As industries grow in coherence, the trade association becomes more important. In these conclaves, management meets its rivals for public favor on a different plane and from a different approach than it does in the market place. In the latter, management is waging a definite campaign, as it were, for votes at the polls. But in the debates and the deliberations of a common industry it may be seeking support for a business statute, for a policy to regulate mutual conduct. It is more and more difficult, as it is clearly more and more dangerous, for any corporation to be an outlaw in its own industry. Even competitors have numerous

and effective ways to translate parliamentary displeasure into market votes. To this extent, though the competitor belongs to the economic Opposition, the management bloc finds occasional need for his backing of its government policies.

Finally, as corporations have increased in size, in numbers affected, and in power, management has had to reckon with the public. In one sense, of course, not only all the members of these several groups, but management itself, are parts of 'the public.' For the moment, however, I am referring to the specific public relations with which an enterprise finds itself intimately concerned. Among these relationships are the fiscal, as involved in taxation; the political, as related to legislation; the social, as raised by community problems of education, health, and the like. To-day it is only a trite commonplace to record that 'the public be damned' days are gone forever. The public, unseen but not unheard, sits in at every important council table of management. On specific questions, the public, or rather a part of it, may be opposed, but it is not ignored.

IV

By this examination we return to the primary facts which are before us. The public with which business must deal at the moment forms a critical audience, none too appreciative in its mood. In presenting briefly the dramatic personæ of the industrial cast, I have tried to obtain at least understanding for the management rôle. We can now scan, with better perspective and in fairer proportions, the stage setting in which its difficult performance must be given.

I have already ventured the opinion that management seems now obliged to play its part under drastic changes in

the competitive scheme. So far as the emphasis is on change, it seems to me underscored for American management particularly.

Our sudden transformation from a debtor to a creditor nation — not moderately, but on giant proportions — carries large portents for industry. That our political grasp of this far-reaching fact, as expressed in the fiscal and foreign policies of government, has been faltering will not void the consequences for industry. Indeed, it has already aggravated them. Business, and especially finance, are becoming aware that theories of stagecoach government cannot be applied successfully to the facts of radio commerce.

Second only, perhaps, to the overturn in our international status are the internal effects of our altered policy toward immigration. In this instance, the political expression of economic fact is on surer ground. No less than the other, this forcible halt to rapid growth in population means many new things to industry. Obviously, too, they are not limited to consumptive demand, but extend beyond into the processes of production itself.

In the midst of such forces, not to mention other and lesser ones, management finds itself with an economic machine carrying certain liabilities on an unprecedented scale.

There is a whole group of industries burdened by large excess of productive capacity. In some cases this is true even when measured by a rate of growth no longer with us. The period of war-time demands, reinforced by the expansions of post-war activity, has confronted us with an array of surplus men, materials, and machinery on every hand. Our very strides in the efficient use of these things have added to our predicament. In greater or lesser degree, we find the facts similar in agriculture and industry, in trans-

portation and in mineral resources. Over and above the domestic situation, to add to the burden of its effects, we find ourselves related to a world trade which is in a similar fix.

More or less evolving from the mechanics of surplus is a mental obsession that makes them worse. It seems only properly described by the worship of 'volume.' This factor, also, is more acute in the United States than elsewhere. It is an inevitable result of mass-production methods, in which we have been pioneers and are now experts. From the financial point of view, the huge investment in power-driven machines and the piling up of related overhead burdens—including the costly distribution methods to secure mass sales—are giant spurs in the flanks of industry. Where direct cost is low and overhead is high, it is cheaper to run at a loss than not to run at all. Even in times of good demand, the Ford philosophy of ever more and more in exchange for less and less gleams with a mirage of profits. For industries with relatively fixed demand or with contrary economics of cost, such a policy is either illusory or outright suicidal.

Finally, among its present threats, management faces shattered price levels. There is no space here to go into the intricacies of the price system, even were I equipped to do so. Suffice to record the simple fact of a fairly unified flow in the price stream, and its effect on all business tides. We have seen an array of basic commodities, some of them protected by the stoutest of government arms, crash to the lowest point for years. Cotton, wheat, sugar, rubber, coffee, silver, copper—these are but a few. The price debacle is no mean obstacle to the desired restoration.

However, the cloud has a silver lining. As with other balance sheets,

these liabilities, serious though they are, may be balanced by certain assets. Fortunately, too, these assets are perhaps quite as well, or even better, secured for American management than for some of its fellows.

It definitely enters upon the new era of competition with a far greater knowledge of the facts. Doubtless the public little realizes the recent advance in statistical progress. Larger and deeper reservoirs of industrial data are now available to be tapped by individual mains than ever before. While far from perfected for many industries and still inadequate for some, essential records for use in basic policies of production and distribution are more generally at hand. At the very least, the first steps to stability and control are less difficult and more possible than they otherwise would have been.

In part related to fact finding, but supplementing knowledge with power, are the widened, and constantly widening, areas of control. The growth by mergers, by chains, by combination; the advances by trade associations; the spread in geographical location of industries—all these present better approach to stabilization. It is true that each involves certain new business risks, and that some may revive certain old perils to the public interest. Both tendencies demand scrutiny and safeguard. By and large, however, the extended areas of control and the restricted areas of conflict move generally, though at times unsteadily, in the direction of stability.

Last, but largest among the outstanding assets, is the notable stride in management technique itself. In earlier comment upon the discrepancy between political praise and industrial performance, I may have seemed to undervalue the increased efficiency of individual management. If so, I wish here and now to make the record

straight. Not even the chaos in which business as a whole found itself in the late depression, nor even the habitually demoralized state of particular industries, can refute the fact of progress, and marked progress, in the unit enterprise.

Indeed, this advance alone would be sufficient grounds for the belief that business can and will make a frontal move all along the line. What managers in the best corporations have attained is the best augury of what their industry can do. What modern practice can do within a single enterprise, beset by the conflicts and complexity of ruthless competition, it can do even better under coöperative means. The increased stability of operation, even in highly seasonal trades; the stabilization of wages and hours; the better coördination of production, sales, and finance; the advances in accounting analysis and in purchasing policies — all these and more have been developed to the point where results are indisputable, and their extension equally so. American management has done a fine job — as far as it has gone. To secure greater stability, it need only move farther down the same road.

For stability will be henceforth the great issue in industry.

Enlightened management to-day, and an enlightened public to-morrow, will jointly accept this as the first item on the agenda of business. From the point of view of the human interests involved, all else is but detail. Even for the merely monetary values at stake, both management and public have already awarded highest honors on the stock exchanges to stabilized enterprise. Not the companies which move by fits and starts, not the industries of alternate feast and famine, but the enterprises of slow and sure and steady advance are most assured of a governing bloc!

V

As we proceed to some programme of 'next steps,' what is the lesson in all this for the public? How may its aid best be thrown to the hired men of management who are, in this instance, its burden bearers?

At the outset, for the third of my original propositions, I intimated the necessity for a greater measure of moral force in the new competition. It is for the intelligent and sympathetic support of such policies that management must rely upon the public portion of its bloc. More concretely, it must be assured this support from that group, drawn from the public, which forms also its investors. If not, management will find its difficulties made quite as heavy by the confusion of public opinion as it normally does by the conflict of clashing interests.

One of the earliest and simplest things the public can do in behalf of management is to rid itself of some old shibboleths and war cries. As they unite in a real crusade for stability, they fight together the forces which either seek deliberately to profit by instability or, by sheer ignorance, threaten to demoralize the industrial plan. The speculative gambler without and the industrial guerrilla within are alike the foes of stability. A promoter greedy for gain, a labor leader ambitious for power, a producer running amuck against the code of trade practice — any of these may fall in that class. On the other hand, a financier seeking to consolidate demoralized enterprises, a trade-union trying to defend its membership, a group of corporations attempting to conserve a natural resource, may clearly be allies in a common cause.

Consequently, some of the ancient impedimenta — 'capital versus labor,' 'big business versus little fellow,' 'the

trust versus the independent,' 'protection versus free trade,' and many familiar stand-bys — will have to go. They will be not only meaningless but harmful in such an effort as ours.

Some policies, necessary to be adopted, may cut across both old prejudices and old wisdom as well. All of them will require a backbone of moral courage and character in actual application.

Among these paths to stability, for example, it seems plain that management must substitute, generally speaking, restriction for expansion. How else, for the time at any rate, are we to cope with surpluses and excessive capacity? We certainly cannot continue madly adding mill to mill, machine to machine, mine to mine; forcing output for the sake of costs, forcing sales for the sake of volume, reducing profit to reduce overhead. We are faced with weary markets and tired consumption. Our first job is obviously to create better distribution to better consumers. It will require courage for management and genuine support from the public to turn so markedly aside from our present road.

To obtain far greater discipline in trade association and industrial groups, both legal and practical changes are necessary. If present anarchy is to be gradually supplanted by self-government in industry, we must have better policing and patrol. It is often the retort of the reactionary to the theorist that 'you can't change human nature.' Granted that it seems to change slowly, at least let's control it while we educate. At present, even the government agencies have faltered and grown timid in the important matter of trade practices. Let's move on.

A policy of much extended integration, both within and among industries, is clearly before us. It is not necessary, even if it were possible, to

tackle the whole economic structure en masse. Let us begin with the most necessary reforms. Consider the present situation in our natural-resource group — coal, oil, and natural gas. Not only are they competitive for the fuel favors of the nation, but the same basic values of conservation apply to each. Take the transportation group of railroads, motors, and shipping, where similar reasoning applies. Or, as a still different example, take the vital interdependence of railroad, coal, and steel; of automobiles, steel, and rubber; of textiles and clothing; of the collective industries called 'construction.' In each of these cases, enough has been done already to lay a foundation. Let's build a story at a time.

The problems with which we are faced and the policies we must apparently accept for their solution, I repeat, involve objectives that are ethical quite as much as or more than they are purely economic. If this be true, let us not be afraid first of all to admit the fact. There seems no good reason why we should fumble or stutter about it.

The present need of management is to see its problem steadily and to see it whole. There is no inherent disgrace in admitting that its economic machine might develop less friction with more use of moral lubricants. There is nothing especially visionary in a programme to bring backward industries abreast of good corporation practice. There is certainly little to be lost and much to be gained — not only in relief to the burdens of management but in material return to the other parties to industry — in substituting for the combination of boom profits and panic losses a stabilized earning power. The outside gambler, excited by speculative gains, and the inside guerrilla, reckless of all restraint, are the only real dissenters.

For management, as for the public, the real difficulty is to find the time and the means to tackle what, after all, is no one's particular job.

'That which is everybody's business is nobody's business!'

When old Izaak Walton said that, he came as near being a 'compleat' economist as he was an angler! Indeed, before he was so occupied as a fisherman, he had been busy as an ironmonger.

The truth is that the boom is nobody's business. When we dig ourselves out of the Slough of Despond, and return to active prosperity, it is nobody's business that we gradually speed on into the mad whirl of the boom. Then the smash! In these dark days, we have come nearer than ever before to making the depression everyone's business. Surely we can do as much about this other hateful thing.

To this end management knows that it must wage a long fight for better in-

dustry; pursue a slow painful process of trial and error; evolve an intricate schedule for architect, draftsman, engineer, for builders not with steel and with stone, but with courage and faith. As the burden bearer sits at the centre of conflict, and as he listens watchfully to the roar of your machines, all he may reasonably ask, and all he may justly expect, is your intelligent support. He knows that his, and his alone, is the job.

You of the many millions out there in the darkened theatre where the play is on, and management can perceive its 'public' but dimly across those foot-lights of which the glares are furnaces and smelters and boilers — judge the actor tolerantly. Compare his good performance with his bad. Be critical if you will, but be fair if you can.

To you, business may have resembled a wild scramble of dirty urchins for pennies, but remember: —

The deliberate building of a commonwealth is a man's job!

FALLING PRICES

BY HORACE W. FOSKETT

I

IN medical science there is an axiom to the effect that 'where many remedies are suggested, there is none that is effective.' If such an axiom applies to the field of political economy, business must be in a 'bad way,' for there is no limit to the number of suggested cure-alls for the present ailing condition of business and industry.

Of course there are some who still say that all of our troubles are but a state

of mind, — the Christian Scientists of business, if you please, — who would have us change all merely by thinking prosperous thoughts. Such talk may be appropriate for the drawing-room after a good dinner, but it is not readily accepted by the hundreds of thousands who are facing starvation; nor does it help the farmer who finds his wheat selling at about half of what it did a year ago; nor does it make the retailer feel any better in the face of a 15 per cent reduction in sales, nor the whole-

saler who finds his sales off almost a fourth.

A 'business is good' slogan enclosed with the notice of a passed dividend may be just as satisfactory as a dividend check, but I doubt if many will find it as negotiable. A decrease of one third in railroad earnings, a drop of one fourth in bank clearings, over 3000 commercial failures in one month, 142 bank failures in one week, time money in Wall Street at 2 per cent, call money renewing at 1½ per cent, and over five million workers unemployed, may mean that business is good, but I doubt it.

If, then, we are willing to admit that business is not good, but suffering from some acute malady, it is but natural that we should lend a willing ear to those who propose a cure-all for our troubles.

Since there is no pure food and drugs act requiring our business doctors to show on the label the ingredients which make up their remedies, it is necessary that these cure-alls be analyzed, first as to their content, and secondly as to their probable effect on business, before we can decide which, if any, has the greatest possibilities of benefit.

All doctors agree that business is suffering from a declining price level, a malady which apparently is worse than leprosy or the seven-year itch. If we accept the diagnosis of the trouble as correct (and there is no doubt that prices have declined and, at the time this is written, are still declining), then all that is necessary is to change the trend of prices from down to up, and presto, business is well again.

In order to understand the basis of these cure-alls, it is necessary that we accept a fundamental principle of economics, the quantity theory of money, which is that prices are controlled by just two factors, the volume of business transactions and the supply of

currency. If the supply of money and other forms of credit increases faster than the quantity of goods transferred in the market, prices will rise; if the quantity of goods to be marketed increases faster than the circulating medium, prices will fall; and if both increase or decrease in the same proportion, prices will remain stationary.

This is expressed by the formula

$$P = \frac{M}{T},$$

where P represents price, M, money, and T, the volume of trade.

But, as local chambers of commerce and similar 'booster' organizations have been demonstrating, it is not only the amount of money, but the rapidity with which it circulates, that helps to keep prices up; so we must multiply the amount of money by its rapidity of circulation, R, in order to complete our formula, which then becomes

$$P = \frac{M \times R}{T}.$$

If prices are falling, it may be because too many products are reaching the market, too little money is in circulation, or the right amount of money is circulating too slowly. Therefore, to check the fall of prices, all that is necessary is to adjust arbitrarily one or more of the factors in our formula, and immediately depression is over. The cure is so simple that it is no wonder that the 1930 election resulted in a repudiation of the party in power, for any party that would permit a business depression to last but an instant is guilty of the grossest negligence.

Of course, in defense of the party in power it may be said that, though the remedy is so simple, the doctors are not in agreement as to which factor in our equation is the ailing one. Some declare that the reason for declining prices and the resulting depression is

too little money, some say too much production, while still others maintain that business has developed that dread disease of the business man himself, faulty circulation.

II

When I was a youth, my favorite doctor belonged to that school of medical thought called the homeopaths. His medicine tasted the best, he was the least likely to hurt, and he was the most positive in his diagnosis of any doctor in town. He would take my pulse and temperature, look at my tongue, thump my chest a bit, and confidently state that I was suffering from acute coryzal rhinopharyngitis, and then leave a few sugar-coated pills which he assured me would cure the trouble in short order.

Just as I in my youth looked first to the homeopath for relief from my ills, so business looks first to those doctors whose remedy is the least severe. These doctors, after taking the pulse and temperature of business by means of statistics and charts, gravely announce that we are suffering from a deficient supply of currency, prescribe the expansion of currency by the Federal Reserve System, and confidently predict an immediate recovery from the depression.

It is, of course, easy to see from our formula that any increase in the supply of money will mean an increase in price. The Federal Reserve System is charged by Congress with the responsibility of expanding or contracting the volume of currency in circulation according to the needs of trade and commerce.

If more currency is needed in any particular part of the country, all that is necessary is for member banks in that part of the country to rediscount their notes with the Federal Reserve Bank, for which the Reserve Bank will issue

reserve notes. When the borrower repays his note, the member bank will rediscount another note if it still needs the money, or, if not, will send in the currency. However, if the difference between the Federal Reserve rediscount rate and the current rate at which the member bank lends its funds is quite large, the member bank, according to the accepted theory, will be inclined to extend greater credit to its customers, since rediscounting is profitable; but if the difference in rates is small, the bank will urge repayment of loans and will be less inclined to grant credit, since rediscounting is then unprofitable.

Apparently the Federal Reserve rediscount rate should have a very great influence upon the amount of currency in circulation and the amount of bank credits that are granted; so, by varying the rediscount rate, the Federal Reserve System is alleged to be able to prevent fluctuations in prices. For, if prices have a tendency to rise, — meaning, according to our formula, too much money in circulation, — an increase in the rediscount rate will result in a contraction of bank credit and the retirement of many of the Federal Reserve notes in circulation, which will cause prices to fall; and conversely a decline in prices can be checked by reducing the rediscount rate, which will stimulate liberal credits by banks and thereby increase the volume of money in circulation.

Here certainly we have a cure-all for our business ills; yes, it is possible that Senator Brookhart is right and we have only the Federal Reserve System to blame for everything that goes wrong with business.

Many prominent financiers and business men have been quoted recently as placing the blame for the business depression on the inaction of the Federal Reserve System and have urged that

drastic steps be taken to change the trend of prices. Perhaps we can better understand the remedy they propose if we review the action of the Federal Reserve System during the past few years in attempting to stabilize prices.

In the summer of 1927, the Federal Reserve System, at the request of European bankers, reduced its discount rates to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and purchased government securities in the open market on a large scale in order to ease money in the United States and thereby aid European countries, particularly Great Britain, in their efforts to establish or reestablish their gold standards. Prices began to rise almost immediately, and in the first part of 1928 the Federal Reserve System reversed its policy, began to resell its holdings of government bonds, and increased the rediscount rate to 4 per cent, then to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and finally, in July 1928, to 5 per cent in a vain attempt to check prices. Commodity prices finally yielded to the pressure and remained constant for almost a year, but stock prices continued to rise. In August 1929, the rediscount rate of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York was increased to 6 per cent in a further attempt to force liquidation of stocks held on a margin, but this action was deprecated by the professional advisors of business who told of the 'new era' of values in which hopes and expectations of future accomplishments were substituted for actual earnings and past records as a test of value.

Then came the crash of October 1929, which was followed immediately by a drop in the rediscount rate to 5 per cent, then to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in December, and successive drops in the past year until, in December 1930, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York reduced its rate to 2 per cent. Such radical reductions in the rediscount rate should certainly have been effec-

tive in checking the drop in prices, but our formula failed just as disastrously to function in the depression of 1930 as it did in the boom of 1929.

The critics of the Federal Reserve policy now claim that reductions in the rediscount rate are not sufficient, and that deflation should be checked by artificially increasing the outstanding volume of currency by buying, in the open market, government bonds. The money received from the sale of these bonds would in theory be placed in circulation, and prices would rise because of a greater supply of money.

Unfortunately for this cure-all, the facts are that at present the Federal Reserve System is holding over six hundred million dollars' worth of government bonds, a greater amount than at any other time in its history. All of these bonds have been purchased since November 1, 1929, in a vain attempt to check the decline of prices.

Six hundred million dollars is more than one fourth of the total legal reserves of all the member banks of the Federal Reserve System. Federal Reserve Bank operations in government securities on a scale much smaller than this should, according to the *Annalist*, turn the money market upside down, and should make a scarcity of capital look temporarily like an overabundance of capital; yet such operations by the Federal Reserve System, combined with the lowest rediscount rate in its history, have failed to bring about an increase in prices, so by what line of reasoning can we hope that further attempts to increase the volume of currency artificially will stimulate business activity? To what use would this additional currency be put? Would it be used to finance new automobile factories, when the industry is unable to keep present plants running at more than half time? Would it be used to finance new railroads, when many of

the present roads cannot, out of current earnings, meet their interest charges? Would it be used to build new office buildings, when mortgages on present buildings are being foreclosed because of insufficient rent income? Would it be used to build new apartment houses or residences, when real-estate bond and mortgage concerns are bankrupt or in the hands of receivers because of too many foreclosures? Some suggest that the money would be used to buy foreign bonds to finance purchases of our products by foreign governments, but who would buy foreign bonds in the face of the spread of revolution in South America and Bolshevism in Europe and Asia, even though we could forget our disastrous experience with foreign bonds during the last three or four years?

I am fearful that this very pleasant sugar-coated pill of the homeopaths of political economy will prove to be sugar all the way through, and just as ineffective in the large doses our specialists would prescribe for us as it has been in the careful doses that have been given us by the Federal Reserve System.

III

Having found the remedy prescribed by one group of doctors ineffective, it is necessary that we look further for relief, so we come to a group of doctors of political economy who, had they chosen medicine for a profession, would have been osteopaths. These specialists claim that our trouble is due entirely to faulty circulation, and that by a few treatments they can stimulate circulation and cure our business ills. In our formula, *R* represents the rapidity with which money circulates. It is estimated that the normal rate of circulation is about twelve times a year. Therefore, if we can increase the rate of circulation to eighteen times a year, we shall ac-

complish the same result as though we increased the amount of money by 50 per cent.

It must have been one of these specialists who placed the admonition to 'buy now' on each page of the November issues of *Liberty*. Babson, that eminent prophet of business who takes great credit for predicting the stock-market crash several months before it happened, proposes, as a cure-all for depression, greater expenditures for advertising on the part of industry to promote greater buying on the part of the public and thus increase the rapidity with which our money circulates from our pockets to the retailer, to the wholesaler, to the manufacturer, to the advertising agency, to the magazine, to Babson's pocket.

Readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* noted an article by Foster and Catchings, entitled 'Riotous Savings,' in which their solution for all of our business troubles was more spending and less saving. They make a very plausible case for spending on the theory that savings are of no value unless invested in productive enterprise, and, as there is too much productive enterprise now, the solution is to spend and spend and spend, whether wisely or foolishly, they do not care, just so we raise the consumption of goods to the productive capacity of the nation.

These authors have shaken off the shackles of their profession and have become pupils of Henry Ford, that self-appointed authority on practically all subjects, who has recently turned his attention to economics and developed a new theory called by Kenneth Burke 'the economic value of waste'; for Mr. Ford bases all prosperity on the increasing productivity of industry. Of course, there is a limit to the amount of goods that an individual can consume, but there is no limit to what he can waste; therefore business need

never face a saturation point. The rapid destruction of goods, either through misuse, obsolescence, or waste, means more spending, therefore an increase in the rapidity with which our money circulates and a resulting increase in price.

When Henry Ford himself practises his own preachings by placing sand instead of grease in the bearings of his machinery so that they will wear out more rapidly, then and only then shall I be willing to accept this theory of 'the economic value of waste.'

All these schemes, and many more that I have not enumerated, have but one purpose, that of increasing the rapidity with which money circulates and therefore accomplishing the same purpose as an increase in the volume of money; but I am fearful that they will all come to naught, since those that would listen to such advice are still making payments on 1929 installment purchases and have nothing left to spend, and those that are able to spend realize that it is against their own best interests to spend at the present time.

Others, such as B. C. Forbes, place the obligation to spend upon the leaders of industry rather than individuals. Louis Guenther, the publisher of the *Financial World*, in a recent article told of the large cash reserves of industry. He says, 'Induce owners of this capacious purse to open it and again freely spend its contents, of which they have more than ever before owned, and commerce will then quickly take care of itself and eliminate all further occasion for discouraging comparisons.'

It was this theory that prompted President Hoover's key men of industry to promise billions of dollars' worth of new construction for 1930. The one key man that made his promise good was the president of a Western railroad, who completed before March 1929 his entire year's construction

programme in a vain attempt to do his part to restore prosperity. Recent calculations have shown that, had this railroad waited until late summer or fall before starting its construction programme, the contract prices would have been reduced by almost 20 per cent. I am fearful that the stockholders of this railroad will be more inclined to censure than applaud the patriotism of their president.

Since self-interest is always more powerful than community interest, I fear that industry will not take kindly to our osteopathic treatments to stimulate circulation. Since industry will not and individuals cannot respond to such treatment, I am afraid we must conclude that there is no more likelihood of business recovery from following the advice of the osteopaths than there was from following the advice of the homeopaths of economic theory, so we must look to a more strenuous remedy for our cure.

IV

When all other remedies fail to restore an individual to good health, the surgeon is finally called in, and after much consultation and examination the patient is finally placed upon the operating table and the offending organ is removed. If the patient is alive when removed from the operating room, the operation has been exceedingly successful.

Just so with business, for the surgeons of economic thought to whom we have finally referred our business ills have diagnosed our trouble as too much trade, or overproduction, and have recommended an operation.

Stuart Chase, in a recent article entitled 'Overproduction, the Enemy of Prosperity,' tells us that the automobile industry of this country is capable of producing over eight million cars each year, yet in the boom year of 1929

only 6,295,000 cars were sold in the entire world. The boot and shoe industry is capable of producing over nine hundred million shoes a year, yet in a boom year less than one third that number of shoes were sold. American oil wells are capable of producing almost six million barrels of oil a day against a demand for less than four million. The overproduction of the textile industry is well known. The steel industry is capable of producing sixty-six million tons against a demand for forty-two million. The overproduction in agriculture has been so well advertised by Chairman Legge of the Federal Farm Board and all the other real friends of the dirt farmer that it is a waste of effort to mention it here.

Therefore, according to the surgeons, all that is necessary to cure our business troubles is to 'cut out' overproduction, thereby reducing the volume of trade and automatically increasing prices, which will end the period of depression.

But, unlike their counterparts in medicine, the surgeons of economic theory operate without the benefit of any anæsthetic. The cries of hunger of the families of the five million unemployed, punctuated at intervals by the dull thuds of business failures, bear witness to this lack of anæsthesia.

In the past, such operations have been a complete success, according to our surgeons, for the patient failed to die. But of course business was left in such a weakened condition, owing to the lost purchasing power of the masses, that the convalescent period was greatly prolonged and the scars of the operation, in the form of abandoned factories and homes, have remained as evidence of the illness.

Then, too, there are those graduates of the newer school of economic thought who have developed a wonder-

ful anæsthetic variously known as export debentures, valorization, stabilization, and the like. Under the influence of this anæsthetic, it is not necessary to curtail production; it is only necessary to control the amount of the product that reaches the market. The valorization of coffee is the most typical example of the application of this anæsthetic. In 1906 an overproduction of coffee reduced prices to such a low figure that the producer was not getting his costs, so the Brazilian Government, which produced at that time 70 per cent of the world's coffee supply, in coöperation with the State of São Paulo, decided to hold coffee off the market by purchase, transportation, or storage. Planters were lent money by the government on the security of their warehouse receipts. The funds for these loans came from heavy taxes on the transportation of the coffee and on the planters themselves, as well as from foreign borrowing. Excess crops of bumper years were disposed of in leaner years, but the high price of coffee, when compared with the cost of production, made the bootlegging of coffee in Brazil exceedingly profitable, and planters began to raise coffee in Colombia, Venezuela, Central America, and the Dutch East Indies. Not only did the high price of coffee exaggerate its overproduction, but it also resulted in a very considerably decreased demand, until at the present time, with coffee selling at less than one fourth what it did three years ago, valorization has been abandoned, the credit of Brazil and the State of São Paulo is ruined, and the government of Brazil is overthrown. It would appear that the patient had been killed by an overdose of the anæsthetic.

Similar deaths by anæsthesia have occurred in the rubber, cane sugar, nitrate, and camphor industries; yet, had it not been for the courage of

President Hoover or the influence of Wall Street, we should have seen agriculture placed on the table to be operated upon by Doctors McNary and Haugen, while the breath of Senator Brookhart, as he yelled 'Export debentures,' was to anæsthetize the patient.

I am not unmindful that a certain measure of success has been achieved in a few closely knit industries by controlling the volume of trade or products that reach the market, and thus, to a very considerable degree, controlling the price of the product or service. The ultimate test of such schemes comes not in a period of boom, but in a period of depression, such as we are now experiencing, and it is quite possible that before long we may be forced to revise our estimates of the success of such price or trade agreements as exist among the fruit growers, in the oil industry, or in the building trades.

Certainly I am not willing to admit that the cure for our business ills is to be found in price-fixing plans, under which the producer may grow or manufacture an unlimited supply, receiving therefor a fixed price or loan, out of the proceeds of which he is to pay in taxes or in some other manner share his proportionate part of the total loss of his particular industry. The danger of death from such an anæsthetic is greater in my opinion than the danger of death from overproduction or whatever may be ailing industry.

Nor am I willing to admit that we are suffering from a disease that can be cured only by a major operation without anæsthetic. I am beginning to wonder if the surgeons are any more certain to cure than are the osteopaths and homeopaths of economic theory. In fact, I am beginning to wonder if they are not all actuated by selfish motives and more interested in the collection of their fee than in the recovery of the

patient. Since I have lost faith in their cures, I am beginning to lose faith in their diagnoses.

V

What is this dread disease, 'Falling Prices'? What is there so sacrosanct about price that our whole effort should be expended in a vain attempt to hold it to a certain level? Price is merely a convenient method of expressing the rate at which various commodities are exchanged, one for the other. What difference does it make whether twenty bushels of wheat or forty pounds of beef are exchanged for one ounce of gold or one hundred ounces of gold, so long as the ratio of a bushel of wheat to a pound of beef remains as one is to two?

After all the credit that has been taken by the Republican Party for the prosperity of our country, as evidenced by the high wages of labor and the great profits of industry, it is nothing short of heresy even to entertain thoughts of price reductions, but I am convinced that we cannot dispose of the excess products of industry and agriculture by maintaining prices in excess of world prices. President Hoover in his message to Congress boasted that wheat prices at Minneapolis were 30 per cent higher than at Winnipeg and 20 per cent higher than at Buenos Aires. He said corn prices at Chicago were over twice as high as at Buenos Aires and wool prices were more than 80 per cent higher than abroad.

We are told that the salvation of industry and agriculture is to increase the consumption of their products. What better way is there to increase consumption than by reduction in prices to such an extent that our domestic markets can be broadened and our surplus products can compete in foreign markets with the products of other countries? How can we hope to dispose

of a surplus of raw or manufactured products in foreign markets at a price in excess of the current world price?

The only way we can develop our foreign markets is to reduce our high domestic prices and to tear down our protective tariff wall, of which the Republican Party is so proud, so that we can exchange our products for the products of foreign countries which we need. We must exchange these products on the basis of real values as expressed in labor, services, and raw materials, not in that artificial medium known as the dollar, the pound, or the franc.

There is just one way we can place ourselves in a position to do this, and that is by reductions in price throughout the entire industrial structure. Wages, salaries, interest, and profits must be reduced along with the prices of raw and manufactured products. Then and only then will the now idle wheels of industry begin turning at somewhere near their capacity. Then and only then will unemployment cease to be a problem.

Do not for one moment confuse reductions in the prices of all commodities with a decrease in the high standard of living of which we are all so proud. A high standard of living is not dependent upon the amount of money income of the individual—it is dependent upon the amount of consumption goods for which that money income can be exchanged.

We all remember that after the World War, shortly before the stabilization of the German mark, a day's wage for a German laborer was thirty billion marks, while a loaf of bread cost one billion marks. Such wages meant anything but a high standard of living in Germany. Recent investigations under the auspices of the League of Na-

tions have proved conclusively that the higher wage of the American worker as compared with the worker of other countries does not mean the command of a proportionately greater amount of consumption goods.

Do not confuse a general reduction in the price level with the cure-alls of our modern business specialists which we have found so ineffective in restoring business to its former prosperity. It is no hypodermic injection which will immediately transform business from a condition of depression to the state of hysteria that accompanied the war period, or to the frenzied activity of the stock-market fiasco. It is merely an orderly process by which the unhealthy conditions surrounding business at the present time can gradually be eliminated. For so long as we cling to our absurd tariff barriers and so long as we boast of the high prices of our products as compared with world prices, while at the same time we produce more than can be consumed in our domestic market, just that long shall we continue to have periods of business depression with increasing severity.

Until goods can be transported from an area of overproduction to an area of want without regard to territorial limits and unhampered by tariff, export debentures, valorization, price cartels, or what not, we shall continue to have the absurd situation that exists to-day—where all over the world there are too many raw products, too many manufactured products, too much of agricultural products, too much labor, too many factories, too much clothing, too many buildings, too much coal, too much of foodstuffs. There is too much of everything. That is why so many people on the face of the earth are condemned to die of starvation, or freezing, or some similar inconvenience.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

ON THE DECLINE OF THE PLEASANT BOOK

THE other day I met the Old Gentleman Opposite as he came out of the nearest circulating library. We stood a minute before continuing our walk in the direction of home, looking together at the display of current fiction in the window.

The Old Gentleman groaned. My first thought was that he objected to the modernist designs which decorated the paper jackets — perspectives suggesting an earthquake and violences of color suggesting the end of the world. But his displeasure had a deeper root.

'Have you reflected,' said he, 'on the amount of human misery, reproduced by writers and induced in sympathetic readers, which is represented in this window? I give you my word that I have just spent three quarters of an hour in this place, endeavoring to find on the shelves a pleasant new novel for my sister Narcissa. And the conclusion is forced upon me that we are threatened with a famine of agreeable fiction.'

As we proceeded on our homeward way, I mentally called up the image of Miss Narcissa, whose hair is not, like his, red-roan, but pure snow-white, and whose profile suggests a cameo. Should all novels be written for such a reader?

He seemed to divine my thought. 'Of course I don't demand that *all* novels shall be pleasant,' said he, 'but we are now having an overproduction of the loathsome.'

'What do you call a Pleasant Book?' I asked. '*Pollyanna*, perhaps?'

'No. No. Certainly *not*,' he answered firmly. 'You would hardly offer *that* to such a one as my sister. It is not easy to describe the exact flavor I feel to be desirable; but it is n't the flavor of foolishness. Neither do I mean the hard work of the professional humorist, who has "found a formula for drawing Comic Rabbits"; that has its uses, but it is n't what I am looking for. A Pleasant Book has *some* pleasant people in it, as there are in this varied world — ourselves, for example! It has, preferably, a background of some beauty; it has an agreeable atmosphere, warmed with humor; it has, if the gods be favorable, wit; and it does not contain catastrophe or crime. My contention is that the seeker for this sort of thing should not be accidentally precipitated, with the assistance of the publishers' advertisements, into some ghastly abyss.'

'Do you propose a censorship?' said I.

'Oh, by no means,' he answered. 'What I should suggest is a system of insurance. When I go into the Grand Central or the Pennsylvania Station, I see in the ticket offices a little sign offering Accident Insurance. But not far away is a counter piled with printed potentialities of horrible suffering; and against such evils the uninformed purchaser has no protection at all. He is looking for eligible companions on his journey, and he presently finds himself accompanied by the Furies and the Seven Deadly Sins.'

'Now, I project a simple form which will insure the principal characters of a novel — at the expense of the purchaser, of course — against battle,

murder, and sudden death, the habits of brutal speech and blasphemy, which are, it seems, becoming ingrained in the dialogue of fiction, all hideous diseases described in detail, adultery, and the abnormal. Then one could settle comfortably down to his book, assured against unlooked-for shocks. You see that what I propose is merely the protection of a harmless minority. I know that most people would n't care to be protected; they would be like the disappointed little girl in the *Punch* picture, whimpering because she *wanted* the lions to eat Daniel.'

'Why not organize another Book Club,' said I, 'with a group of judges warranted to be tender-minded? I can see the newspaper illustration of their benevolent faces now, all in a beaming row, like sunflowers over a fence.'

A ripple of self-mockery ran over his countenance, and the fan wrinkles appeared at the corners of his eyes.

'I am afraid,' said he, 'it would never do. We should be obliged to have at least five judges, and that would seriously deplete our public.'

'I think your list of exclusions,' said I, 'is rather strict; what would you do with the Great Detective Story?'

'Oh, that,' said he, 'is altogether another matter. Narcissa would n't be disturbed by the detective stories; but she does n't read them. She finds them dull.'

'What? The Red Murder, and the Orange Murder, and the Yellow Murder, and the Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet Murders! She finds this startling spectrum dull?'

'Precisely,' he insisted. 'When you have supped full with conventional horrors, they cannot once start you; they are merely counters in a game. They don't affect the imagination. The Detective Novel fills the same need as the cross-word puzzle. It's non-poisonous, but I should n't place

it with the Pleasant Books. It belongs in another group.'

'What would you do with the fashionable fantastic romance?' I asked, with a grateful memory of *Lolly Willowses*.

'All dreams, of course,' said the Old Gentleman. 'There are pleasant dreams and nightmares; no nightmares for Narcissa!'

'But even with your exclusions,' I objected, 'is there really such a paucity of Pleasant Books? I can name you a dozen out of hand, beginning with *The Enchanted April* and *Thunderstorm*.' And I did so, though I had to grant that several of them grazed slightly against one or other of his interdictions. 'Particularly,' I told him, 'I should regret the barring of *Expiation*, which seems to my sinful soul one of the pleasantest of all!'

He waived the last point. 'I admit there are difficulties,' said he. 'The percentage of impropriety needs to be fixed. But consider the small proportion of the general output represented by the handful you have named — a few drops of sweetness, or sub-acidity, in the bitter bucket.'

A question had been hovering in my mind. 'Do you confine your own reading of fiction,' I asked, 'entirely to the Pleasant Book?'

He laughed. 'Not exactly,' said he. 'My imagination is not so sensitive as my sister's; it does n't keep me awake at night. No, I have always read freely. But now that my stay on this planet, I am aware, must needs be short, I am a little particular about the persons with whom I spend the few hours left. I don't elect to spend them with crooks and gunmen, for instance, though such may at present constitute the fashionable society of fiction. As to those grim books which are now ruthlessly plucking the plumes of war, I do read those — though I don't leave

them about, on account of Narcissa. But I won't read the stories, short or long, that are wantonly depluming Life itself. The Great Sad Books, however, — the books of noble tragedy, — do we not always need them and always read them?'

He drooped his eyelids, as retiring into a private chamber of thought, and dropped unconsciously into a certain muted utterance which always indicates that he is quoting Wordsworth: —

'Sorrow that is not sorrow but delight,
And miserable love that is not pain
To hear of, for the glory that redounds
Therefrom to human kind and what we are.

'But,' he went on, coming back to the tone of every day, 'I think there is no doubt as to the decline of the Pleasant Book. I suppose, as Corporal Nym says, things must be as they may; we cannot gather sweet grapes of a thorny time. However, I shall still go on looking for a new novel for Narcissa.'

As he has the rhyming habit, and frequently crystallizes the results of a conversation in verse, I was not surprised to find in next morning's mail the following

BRIEF EPISTLE

To the Doleful Guild of Minor Novelists

Ye facile followers of the fictive art,
I would some pleasant seat were set apart
For such as tire of being hauled up steep
Or lowered in diving suits to frightful deeps.
'A stately pleasure-dome' I don't decree;
A simple summerhouse suffices me,
Where decent souls may sip innocuous tea.
Let the trim trees produce no Dead Sea fruit,
Nor would the upas my mild fancy suit.
Pray you, include not in the landscape scheme
That not-too-sacred river called the Stream
Of Consciousness, whose casual tide must bear
Unlovely flotsam drifting heaven knows where.
No ugly satyr-shapes the paths profane,
But let the tutelary gods remain
Staunch Trollope and the incomparable Jane.
There would I pass some untormented hours
Free from the fear of snakes among the flowers,
Or dangerous felines crouched in cosy nooks:
Give me, good masters, give me Pleasant Books!

TO OLD BOYS

It would be a hard matter to convict an Old Grad of lack of affection for his Alma Mater, not in vociferation only, but oftentimes in works. Through life he bears testimony to the college loyalty bred in him during four years of intensive application. But profounder still is the love of Old Boys for the boarding schools where an æon ago, leaving behind the friendly harbor of home, they first pushed their cockle-shells into deep water. Go back to your school; watch the boys sitting at the front desks. You will see yourself at twelve in corduroys with wide collar and red tie, and as your eye sweeps the big schoolroom you will watch yourself growing up: fourteen — sixteen — finally eighteen, on the first pinnacle of the mountain range of life.

Filled with thoughts like these, a group of Old Boys in England revisited, a few years ago, Clifton School. The discussion turned on what things are most important for the formative years, and whether the experience of men who had hit the mark they aimed at might not be of help to boys just fitting the arrow to the bow.

Sir Francis Younghusband was a member of that group, famous for his Indian career and his march to Lhasa; Sir Henry Newbolt, poet, patriot, and chronicler of the Navy. And, amongst others of great note, Earl Haig, whose imperturbability saved the Empire.

It was agreed that a message signed by these men should be sent to the boys at the School, and Sir Henry Newbolt was requested to draft a letter to the School paper in the name of the group. That letter we here reproduce, knowing well that Old Boys on this side of the water will not neglect its significance.

TO THE EDITORS OF *The Cliftonian*

SIRS,

We are Old Cliftonians who left the School long ago, but are still, and more than ever, concerned for its lasting welfare. We remember the great days of Percival and Wilson, and we have since watched with interest and sympathy every development in the history of Clifton, and every indication of the growth of her power for good. We look with pride on the spirit and success of the younger generations, and we are moved with a strong desire to send them a message out of the past, in the hope that our experience of life may perhaps here and there lighten a difficulty or confirm a faith.

The present age is generally felt to be more chaotic than those which went before it; its theories and its methods are more disorderly, its faults more extravagant, its hopes vaster but more fluctuating. There is more greed, and far less happiness; more aspiration, and yet more uncertainty and discouragement. Life has become more controversial; controversy is more violent; the unintelligent are perverting science into a new form of superstition; religion is in danger of being crushed out between the materialistic selfishness of the rich and luxurious and the materialistic hopes of the overworked and underpaid.

For this feverish condition of society we have no new remedy to offer, but we are impelled to remind our fellow Cliftonians of an old one. We who now write are men of different character and experiences, but we have at least this in common. In the last forty or fifty years we have lived through times of great national prosperity and still greater danger and anxiety. These years have convinced us all that no kind of life is complete, no kind of life can make the world intelligible or give us any lasting satisfaction, unless there enters into it the element which is called Religion. We are not speaking of this or that form of religion, but of the impulse which is expressed in all such forms: the desire to find God in the universe and to understand our relation to Him.

It is our hope that our School may receive in the future a continually more effective equipment for this search; such

instruction as helped us in our own youth to recognize that our existence is more than an individual existence; that we live in a world of mutual influence, of interest concentrated on self and also of interest directed to the service of others; further still, that 'there is a quality of life which lies always beyond the mere fact of life,' beyond pleasure, beyond success, and beyond happiness. These are good, but they can neither guide us nor in the long run satisfy us. Guidance and lasting satisfaction are, as we believe, to be found only in faith — in the assurance that the life of man progresses by conformity with a Universal Spirit and a divine beauty of character; so that every act and preference of every one of us is of immortal consequence, because it either helps or hinders the realization of the order which God is perpetually designing for the world.

HAIG, F. M.

HERBERT WARREN

J. H. WHITLEY

HENRY NEWBOLT

FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

THE DALMATIAN MADONNA

ONE summer, soon after the war, I found myself staying at Ragusa, a small, picturesque town on the Dalmatian coast. Having discovered that the private chapel which Ivan Mestrovic, the famous Serbian sculptor, was designing and erecting for a wealthy Yugoslav family was not many miles away, my traveling companion, a Serbian, and I decided to go to see it.

We rose early that morning, for the bus which ran down the coast from Ragusa to Cattaro left at seven, and there was only one bus daily. Stealing down the thickly carpeted stairs of the sleeping hotel, past the yawning night porter, through the garden, and across the road, we reached the small Square, where, even at that early hour, a waiter was opening a café. There were two cafés in this Square: at night a male orchestra played at one, while the

rival café opposite employed a ladies' orchestra for its patrons. I had seen Mestrovic sitting in the latter café one evening.

The waiter brought us coffee with surprising quickness; but as we lifted the welcome cups to our lips the warning honk-honk of the bus came to our ears. So, gulping down as much hot black coffee as we conveniently could, — meanwhile thrusting notes into the waiter's hand, — we fled across the Square, rushed round the corner, and literally threw ourselves into the already-filled bus as it moved off.

It was a typical Adriatic-coast summer morning — warm and balmy, with a promise of noonday heat in the air. As the bus sailed gayly up the dusty coast road, — the insouciant Slav driver taking perilous curves with a splendid disregard for danger, — down below, to our right, the green-blue waters of the sea lay placid in the morning sunshine beneath the pale blue Adriatic sky. For a Northerner it was an eternally exciting spectacle of beauty, but to the tight-lipped, dull-faced peasants, sitting pressed against us in the bus, it must have been merely the monotonous landscape of a life of hardship and toil.

Sometimes the bus would pause in its headlong course, pulling up sharply to pass a slow-moving cart driven by a bandit of a man in crimson blouse and wide royal-blue breeches, or a stubborn donkey, on which would be seated a very dignified little peasant woman balanced delightfully beneath her wide white headdress.

Where the road branched off to Ragusa Vecchia, our destination, we were forced to alight. The bus stopped; we got out, and it whizzed off again, leaving us enveloped in a cloud of dust. When this cleared we found ourselves before a kind of small roadside inn. Our thoughts ran back to the hastily

gulped morning coffee; we decided to have some more, and entered the inn.

It was a deserted place. Heaven knows who patronized it. Judging by the interior, not many people passed that way, or entered the inn. A small front room, a couple of tables and some chairs set out for customers, a counter, a few semi-bare shelves, half a dozen melancholy-looking bottles — that was all. We had little hope of getting anything to drink here. But out of a side room came a young woman to attend to our wants, and my Serbian companion, who did all the talking, ordered some coffee. She assured us that we could have it.

As my companion turned to talk to me — we were speaking German — I was able to observe the young woman, and was amazed at her unusual beauty. She had the Slav Madonna type of face, longishly oval in shape, with the warm, full-brimming brown eyes of the Balkan Slav, and full, graceful red lips set against deathly pale cheeks. I was astonished to see her in that dismal hole of a deserted inn. And as she went to execute our order I gazed with intense curiosity at her disappearing slender figure. What is she doing here, where she obviously does n't belong, I asked myself. And as I abstractedly answered the vivacious chatter of the Serbian, my thoughts speculated on the young woman and her mystery.

Suddenly she was back with us. And suddenly she addressed me directly in English, saying, surprisingly: 'You're American, are n't you?' to which I replied: 'No, I'm English. But, may I ask, where did *you* learn to speak English?'

I was surprised and yet not really surprised. For her sudden plunge into my own language, which she spoke fluently, — subtly transforming my Serbian friend, who did n't know a

word of English, into a momentary outsider, — merely confirmed my own vague ideas about the young woman. So there was a mystery after all; there was a story, then! She was not just the ordinary peasant girl of the district. My instinctive interest in human beings was aroused. And while we waited for our coffee, and while we eventually sipped it with luxurious slowness, she unfolded, bit by bit, her pathetic story. It was simple and uncomplicated, human and true.

She had been born in California, to which far country her parents had emigrated about thirty years before. She had been brought up in California, and had gone to school there. Just as she was fourteen, a schoolgirl ready for high school, — in 1910, to be exact, — her parents, having enough of the Paradise on the shores of the Pacific, returned to their native land. And for twelve years — it was now 1922 — the young woman had languished in this forsaken but beautiful spot. She might have had a vague chance of returning to the land of her birth before the war, but 1914 and the subsequent years destroyed any hopes in that direction. Her only brother had been killed in the war, and she was now the only living child of her aging parents.

With a vastly different background from that of the bulk of the country people with whom she mixed, she was still, surprisingly, single at twenty-six, an age when most girls of her country were already married and mothers of children. For twelve years she had pined for the American scene, for the places she had known as a child, for the opportunities which she would have known there. She mourned the fact that while her schoolgirl friends were now secretaries and stenographers in banks and business offices, she was still a household drudge amid this sickly, frugal peasant life. She showed us the

rotogravure sections of the American papers which someone sent her regularly, her voice trailing off into a weary, hopeless whine, picked up from the native peasant intonation, as she gazed with envy on the dazzling pictures of loveliness and beauty displayed therein. When I asked her timidly why she did n't marry one of the local swains, she replied with a pathetic shrug of her thin shoulders and a wry smile. Her thin voice, speaking its unaccustomed language, was filled with infinite hopelessness. She was worn out with waiting, and although young in age her spirit had grown old and querulous in the shadow of unlived years. She was like a character out of a Chekhov play — beautiful, futile, charming, and frustrated.

When we left the dim gloom of the inn and the weary voice of the young woman behind, it seemed as if the whole painful travail of human existence had been unrolled before us. We turned our back on it — outside, Life called. The hot yellow sunshine seemed gay; in the distance was the beckoning sea. We walked hurriedly down the road toward the shore, quickly throwing off the mood of depression which the young woman's story had induced, until we ran for joy and shouted to each other nonsensically in German, a language foreign to both of us, finally racing madly down the deserted country road into the village of Ragusa Vecchia.

The Mestrovic chapel, then in course of construction, was at the very end of the village, placed on the top of a small hill, looking right across the sea, its walls rising in beauty and grace against a natural background of dark trees and flame-shaped cypresses. It was approached by a narrow path which led upward from the shore road; up this awkward way the workmen had to haul the heavy building materials.

All morning long we wandered round the unfinished chapel, watching the quiet workers as they toiled among their materials. All was gray — dust gray, light gray. We gazed with suitable awe and reverence at the multitude of Madonnas gradually covering the grayish walls—they were everywhere. These Mestrovic Madonnas, with their longishly oval patient faces, eternally waiting for the urgent miracle of life to awaken them out of their hopeless trance, were worlds apart from the warm, radiant Madonnas of Botticelli in Florence, whose lambent *quattrocento* faces bloomed like flowers.

Noon came, bringing with it lunch, and afterward we lay down on the shore and slept, waking in mid-afternoon to hire a small boat which we rowed round the little peninsula. Exploring every small alley and corner of the village, we passed a glorious day in vivid forgetfulness of the young woman of the inn; and duly caught the evening bus back to Ragusa before twilight began to fall.

But we were not allowed to forget the young woman altogether, for, looking out of the bus windows along the coast road, we saw her waving to us, a virginal figure now, for she was wearing a long white dress which made her

look like a young girl as we went flying along. In one hand she held a small bunch of flowers, but the speed at which we were going prevented us from seeing more than a fleeting smile of gratitude. We waved back, frantically. No doubt she had waited, hopefully, expecting to see us once again before we returned to Ragusa. As we went dashing round a corner she disappeared from view.

It was the last I saw of her, for I never went that way again. But I have often wondered what has happened to her. Has she married, giving up all hope of ever getting back to America? Or, now being thirty-four, is she a bitter old maid losing all her looks? Or did she ever escape from the Dalmatian coast and come to America?

It was not until we were in the train next day, en route for Serajevo and Belgrade, that the sudden realization why the face of the young woman formed such a strong visual image in my mind came to me: her Slav Madonna face was identical with the face of the Mestrovic Madonna, moulded in the same lines, instinct with the same racial beauty. Life and art were fused in her longishly oval face. The idea made me smile. It was a happy one.

FINCH'S FORTUNE¹

A Novel

BY MAZO DE LA ROCHE

IV

THE Vaughans were the first to arrive: Meggie, a little plumper, a little more exuberantly the wife and mother; Maurice, a trifle grayer, his masculinity a trifle more muffled. Meg clasped Finch to her. Oh, the lovely depth of that bosom! He was never taken to it but he wished he might burrow into its tender depths and remain forever enfolded there. She gave him three kisses on the mouth, and put a packet into his hand. 'With *our* love and many, many good wishes.' Wake crowded up beside him to see. It was a white evening scarf of heavy silk. 'Oh, thanks,' Finch murmured; and Maurice shook him by the hand.

Maurice had been warned on the way by his wife not to make any reference to Finch's inheritance, but he could not resist saying, 'Well, enjoy it while you're young!' And his glance did not indicate the scarf.

Meg caressed Wakefield, remarked his delicate looks, and went up to Alayne's room to lay off her things. The men stood about with the conciliatory air worn by them in the presence of female antagonisms. They knew that Meggie and Alayne disliked one another, that there was no love lost between Meggie and Pheasant. They would be glad when other guests arrived.

They soon arrived in a stream. The Fennels: the rector, thickset, beaming, his hair and beard tidier than was usual even on Sundays; George, resembling him; Mrs. Fennel, long-backed, hatchet-faced, with eyes always searching for a vacant seat into

which she might drop; Tom, resembling her. Next, the two Miss Laceys, whose late father had been a retired Admiral, and the elder of whom had been after Nicholas forty-seven years ago. After these Miss Pink, the organist, prematurely aged by being rushed, year in and year out, through the hymns and psalms by the combined impetuosity of the Whiteoaks at a speed which she thought little short of blasphemous. She was in a flurry at exposing her shoulders in a seldom-worn evening gown, and had veiled them by a scarf, though they were, in truth, the best part of her. These were the old, old friends and neighbors.

Considerably later, and from town, came the Leighs. They were mere acquaintances to the rest of the family, but Finch thought of Arthur Leigh as his best friend. Mother and daughter in their sheathlike gowns of delicate green had the appearance of sisters. Finch could scarcely wait to have Arthur alone that he might tell him of his contemplated trip, with all the more eagerness because Arthur himself had spoken of spending that summer in England.

The party was now complete except for two people. These were neighbors, living in a small, rather isolated house, but comparative strangers. About a year and a half before, Antoine Lebraux had brought his wife and daughter from Quebec and acquired this place with the object of going into the breeding of silver foxes. He had been in the Civil Service, and, his health having broken down, he was advised to turn to an outdoor life. His wife had discovered this small and neglected property for sale. Lebraux, with the enthusiasm of his race, had thrown himself heart and soul into the new life.

¹The first installment of this novel appeared in the April number. A brief synopsis of the opening chapters is to be found in the Contributors' Column. — EDITOR

Reliable parent foxes had been bought, and he had read every book obtainable on the subject of their breeding and care.

Renny had met and liked Lebraux. He had ridden over frequently to see how the foxes were progressing. The first litters were admirable. The change of climate had done Lebraux good, and his malady had shown signs of improvement. But good luck did not follow in good luck's train. His most valuable vixen had somehow dug her way out and was never seen again. The later litters were weakly, a vixen died; then, when fresh stock had been bought in the hope of raising the stamina, thieves had broken in and stolen the best of them. The bodies of the foxes had been found less than a mile away, stripped of their pelts.

All this told on the health of Lebraux. He had become so irritable that Renny's heart had gone out to his wife and daughter. When Lebraux had at last been confined to the house he had begged Renny to come to him as often as possible. He could forget his sense of disappointment, of failure, of impending disaster, in Renny's presence. 'I like you!' he had often exclaimed. 'I like you to be near me. You and I have an appreciation of the fine and sensitive things of life.' Renny had never been told this before, and it pleased him. And so they had talked of horses and foxes and women.

Lebraux had taken to drinking brandy. He had had uncontrollable outbreaks of despair, during which he would threaten to do away with himself. Only the presence of Renny would calm him. Often Mrs. Lebraux had sent her young daughter all the way to Jalna with a note for Renny, begging him to go to her help. When, in January, Lebraux had died, Renny had spent half his time in the house.

It had been Renny's idea to invite the mother and daughter, an idea that had not met with much favor from the rest of the family. But Renny had his way. The poor woman had never been anywhere since her husband's death, and the little girl would keep Wake in countenance.

If Mrs. Leigh and Ada had looked like sisters as they entered the drawing-room, Mrs. Lebraux and little Pauline seemed of no relation to each other. Mrs. Lebraux had a blonde, hardy, wholesome look, was

the daughter of a Newfoundlander who had made a good deal of money in the fisheries and somehow lost it, and she resembled him. Pauline was like Lebraux, a thin, dark child of fifteen, in white, with the promise of some beauty. Her parents had met on the toboggan slide by the Château Frontenac, and had precipitately slid into matrimony.

It was an odd, mixed party, Alayne thought, as they filed in to dinner. It was the first time she had entertained since her marriage, and she was rather wrought up over it, fearful lest all should not go well. But she need not have had any apprehension on that score. Where there were Whiteoaks gathered, there was no danger of dullness. The family were all talking at once, as a garden of hardy flowers might burst into vigorous bloom at the first encouragement of the sun. A festive occasion, the prospect of a good dinner with plenty to drink after it, was sun enough for them. Ernest took in Mrs. Leigh; Nicholas, his old flame, Miss Lacey; Vaughan, Mrs. Fennel; Finch, Ada Leigh; Renny, Mrs. Lebraux, with the others distributing as congenially as possible down to the two youngest, who came last, smiling gravely at each other, she half a head taller than he.

Whatever Mrs. Wragge's faults might be, it would never be said of her that she was not a good cook. Fowls, under her hand, shed their earthly plumage and turned into glistening forms of celestial sweetness. Her vegetables were drained at the critical moment, the pastry was light. Only her pudding was heavy, and there was no pudding to-night. Wakefield could scarcely credit his own senses when he saw all the best china and silver on the table at once. Things that usually lived in cabinets, behind glass, were now on the table looking as though they were used every day. Several wineglasses were clustered at each place, even his own and Pauline's.

'Have you ever been to anything like this before?' he asked her, trying to feel not too important.

'No. Is n't it lovely?' She smiled, and he thought how prettily her lip curled from her little white teeth. He noticed her long white hands, then stared at her mother across the table.

'You don't look a bit like your mother,'

he remarked, settling his chin above his Eton collar.

'No, I look like my daddy.' She stopped eating and withdrew into herself, a look of sad remoteness shadowing her small face.

'My father,' he observed, looking hard at her, 'died before I was born.'

She was startled into regarding him with an almost fearful interest. 'Did he really? I did n't know they *could*. I always thought you had to have both father and mother when you were born.'

'I did n't. My father was dead and my mother died *when* I was born.'

She breathed, 'How awful for you!'

He agreed.

'Yes,' he said. 'I'm what is called a posthumous child. I think it has preyed on my mind. I think it is what has made me so delicate. I'm not able to go to school, you know. I go to Mr. Fennel for lessons, but I have n't been for weeks because of the weather.'

'I wish I could go to him, too. That would be nice, would n't it?'

He looked dubious.

'Yes — but you're a Catholic, are n't you?'

She nodded. 'But Mother is n't. I don't believe she'd mind. Do you think he'd have me?'

'Well, he might. If you'd promise not to try to convert me or anything. He'd not like to risk that.'

'Oh, I'd promise!'

Around the table, conversation flowed easily. Alayne, perhaps, was less at ease than the others. She was so anxious that things should go well, especially because of the Leighs. Rags was a constant irritation to her. His shabby trigness, his air of anxiety over the two hired maids, his bending over Renny to whisper to him with an expression of portentous significance. And why did Renny grin up at him in that way? She did wish that Renny would n't talk to Rags at mealtime. Rags seemed always to be hovering behind his chair like an evil genius, and Renny never looked more like his grandmother than when he was grinning up at Rags. What was he saying to that Mrs. Lebraux? She strained her ears to catch the words.

He was saying, 'Well, I'll be very grate-

ful if you will let me have the use of your stable. I could keep two horses there. We're terribly short of room, as it is.'

Mr. Fennel, on the other side of Mrs. Lebraux, joined in. 'I am glad to hear that you are staying on in your house, Mrs. Lebraux. I do hope you are comfortable.'

She turned her round, pale-lashed eyes on him. 'Comfortable! No, I'm not very comfortable. But I'm getting along somehow. . . .'

Then Ernest's musical voice came to Alayne. He was saying to Mrs. Leigh, 'Yes, I'm doing a work on Shakespeare. I've been working on it for many years now. One can't hurry with that sort of thing. But I do feel that the result will be . . .'

How the Whiteoaks loved to talk, she thought. From all about her their voices came, and yet their plates were the first to be swept clean of each course. They seldom asked a question. They took their world as they found it, without curiosity. Only Piers and Miss Pink, whom he had taken in, did not trouble to speak, but were devoting themselves to the business of eating and drinking. She lived alone, and her great economy was food. Now she had allowed her gauze scarf to slide from her shoulders, for even it had seemed to impede her progress toward repletion. Piers was drinking a good deal. His lips were taking on that sweet mysterious curve they had when he was becoming oblivious of his surroundings, and only wished to be left alone that he might give his full attention to the pleasant phenomenon that was taking place inside him.

There was champagne. Nicholas had seen to that. Rags could not have been more solemn about the drawing of the corks if he had bought and paid for it out of his own savings. Something intangible but vital drew them all nearer each other. The fingers of their spirits touched.

Mr. Fennel rose, glass in hand, to propose Finch's health. Finch saw it coming, and drooped closer to Ada Leigh for support. His hour had struck. He was twenty-one and Mr. Fennel was going to propose his health.

The confusion of voices sank into a gentle sigh. All eyes, made brighter or dreamier

by wine, were turned on the rector — all eyes with the exception of Piers's, which were looking into a tranced and pleasing space. Mr. Fennel said: —

'What I am about to do is very agreeable to me. That is to propose the health of a member of this household who to-day has reached the estate of manhood. It is not easy for me to believe this, because it seems only a few years ago that I held him in my arms at the font and baptized him in the church his grandfather had built. His grandfather had built the church in what was at that time a sparsely settled community. He established there the religion of his fathers. And his descendants have never failed in their support of that church. At Jalna he established a family which preserves to-day the traditions of a fine old English family, as few families do in these times of standardization and irreverence for tradition. . . . The memory of his devoted wife — whose presence I seem to feel among us to-night — will long remain fresh in the minds of all who knew her. Her faults — for none of us are perfect — were far outshone by her virtues. . . . This member of her family who has just attained the age of twenty-one — an age that seems quite unbelievably fresh and glowing to me — has been the companion of my sons all his life. With them he has run in and out of the rectory a thousand times on the mysterious quests of boyhood. In their room they have held with him innumerable conferences on the mysterious business of youth. He has enlivened many an evening for us with his music. We have known him in many moods, but none of us have ever known him to do a cruel or shabby thing. I wish him well from the bottom of my heart. I know you will all join me in this. I give you the toast — Finch Whiteoak!'

Mr. Fennel sat down with the unruffled air of a man who had just as lief make a speech as not.

Finch crouched between Ada Leigh and his sister-in-law Alayne with the air of a man to whom the making of a speech would be a task of appalling torture. The heads of those about him swam toward him goggle-eyed like goldfish in a round glass bowl. There was clapping of hands,

glasses clinked. The glass of the bowl shivered into splinters, and Finch was left gasping, looking piteously like a stranded goldfish himself, trying to rise to his feet.

Ada Leigh smiled soft encouragement. She said, 'It will be all right. Just anything that comes into your head — now!' She touched his arm with an impelling gesture.

Renny's voice came down the table, metallic and commanding. 'Up you get, Finch!' and others added jovially, 'Speech, speech!'

But it was Alayne who got him to his feet. Her father and her grandfathers had been New England professors, monitors of the young. Out of the background of their authority, her blue-gray eyes looked dominantly into his, saying, 'Rise and give tongue!' Her fingers clutched his under the tablecloth so tightly that it hurt. He twisted his own about them as he spoke.

How different this was from doing a part in a play! Then, in velvet cloak or in vagabond tatters, he could abandon himself to the portrayal of another's moods. But now he was simply his naked self, and a dozen words were harder to get out than a torrent of talk on the stage. He heard his voice with a curious kind of croak in it.

'It's frightfully good of you — all. I never had such nice things said about me before — in all my life — and I don't quite know what to do about it. Mr. Fennel and Mrs. Fennel could n't possibly have been kinder to me if I'd been their own son — and, of course, everyone present — has been the same —'

'Hear, hear,' said Piers, without moving his lips.

'I can't tell you how much I am enjoying — this occasion,' he continued, looking the picture of despair. 'If I should live to be as old as my grandmother —'

'You'll never do it,' interrupted Piers, without any appearance of having spoken.

Renny threw Piers a fiery look.

'I'd never forget this dinner — and — I do most heartily —' here his voice broke — 'thank you. I hope no one here will ever be sorry that — sorry that —' Good Lord, what was he about to say? Sorry that *what*? Oh, yes, sorry that Gran had left him her money. But he could n't say

that, — it would be horrible, — but what could he say? 'Hope no one here will ever live to be sorry —' he stammered, and sought the ruddy sunrise of Piers's face for inspiration — 'be sorry —'

'That we let you live till you were twenty-one,' supplied Piers, without seeming to utter a word.

There was a burst of hilarious applause. The hero of the occasion sat down.

He took a gulp of champagne.

'You did splendidly,' whispered Ada Leigh, and Alayne squeezed his fingers before she uncurled hers from them. He was flushed, and happily conscious that he might have done worse. He had been delighted at the burst of applause and laughter, though he could not quite recall what he had said that was so witty.

The rugs had been taken up in the drawing-room and hall and the floor waxed, but it was late before anyone suggested that they dance. It was George Fennel who sat down at the piano, very square, very upright, his hands drawing insidious sweetness from the keys. The latest dances from the world of jazz were tossed by George as invitation to this mixed company, some of whom still danced in the style of forty years ago. And how gallantly they responded to the invitation! Nicholas and Ernest with the two Miss Laceys, with whom they had danced the quadrille, the polka, and the schottische on this very floor when they were young men and girls. Mr. Fennel had Pheasant tightly clasped to him, his beard now and again tickling her bare shoulder. Like a captive bird she cast wistful glances at her mate, wishing she might fly down the room with him, in long graceful strides, their bodies as one. And there he was dancing with Miss Pink, who was quite old enough to be his mother!

Miss Pink had been afraid she could not do it. But when once Piers had got hold of her she found that she could, and not only that, but she wished she might go on doing it forever. As for Piers, he scarcely knew whom he was dancing with — old or young, skillful or amateurish, it did not signify. She had been at hand when his forceful body had responded to the inexorable call of the dance.

Alayne was dancing with graceful Arthur Leigh. Wakefield had almost more than he could cope with in Meggie's solid frame. Meg had an eye on Maurice and Mrs. Leigh, who seemed to her to be dancing altogether too well.

Finch had been going to ask Ada Leigh to dance, but had turned away as he saw Tom Fennel loping toward her. He must not be selfish at his own party. With whom would he dance, then? He looked rather vaguely about the room. There was Mrs. Fennel in a comfortable chair near the fire, with a dish of crystallized fruit beside her. And in the farthest corner, on the settee, was Mrs. Lebraux in her black dress, with Renny keeping her company, his back half turned to the dancers. And staring into the cabinet of curios from India was the Lebraux child, her skirt too short, her legs too long, and the back of her head looking as though it needed combing. Her hair stuck out in thick black tufts, giving her an odd, elfin look.

He went to her and said, 'Would you like to dance, Pauline?'

She turned quickly and looked at him searchingly, as though wondering whether or no she would like to dance with him. Then she went sedately to her mother and bent over her. She came back smiling and put her hand into Finch's.

'It's all right. Both Mother and Mr. Whiteoak say to dance.' Her face lit up and she moved her shoulders as though eager to begin.

She was so thin that she felt like nothing more than a wand in Finch's arms, yet there was a wild strength in her movements. He thought she was like a little breeze-blown boat tugging at its anchor. The music was swift, even feverish, for this second dance, but not swift enough for her. He bent to look into her face. He could not tell where the beauty was, but he was satisfied that it was there or would be there.

'You're going to stay on here, aren't you?' he asked.

'Yes — if we can make it pay.'

'The fox farming, you mean?'

'Yes. And we may go into poultry, too.'

'Are n't you afraid the foxes will eat the poultry?'

'That shows how much you know about it! They're kept *absolutely* separate.'

'It will mean a lot of work.'

'We don't mind that, if only we can make it pay.' Her slender body seemed to tighten with resolve. She swayed and dipped and turned like a bird, he thought. And she had a hard time before her, he was afraid. He would like to help them if he only knew how to go about it. This having of so much money opened up new channels to one, gave one a troubling sense of responsibility toward one's fellows.

'Mother and I do all the housework,' she was saying, 'dishwashing, sweeping, and everything. She does outdoor work, too. She's awfully strong.'

'Do you really?' He was astonished, for he had never seen his sister do anything but take care of herself; and Alayne and Pheasant were very much the same, except that Pheasant looked after Mooney, and that none too well, he thought.

V

Pauline and her mother left early. Then the Leighs, with a long motor ride before them. Somehow or other the Fennels packed the Miss Lacey and Miss Pink into their car. The Vaughans were the last to go.

'And I really don't care very much about trusting myself to him in a car, the way he is,' Meg said.

Renny looked his brother-in-law over.

'He'll be all right after a breath of fresh air,' he assured her. 'I'll open the window.'

Maurice watched this move for his revivification with interest. As soon as the window was opened he started the car, and it sped across the lawn, scraping the end of an ice-covered garden seat, and on three wheels gained the drive.

Nicholas was declaiming in the drawing-room.

'I might never have had gout in my life, I was so free from it to-night. As lively as a three-year-old.'

'And I,' said Ernest, 'never thought of my dinner again. And I ate everything!'

'Mrs. Leigh,' declared Nicholas, 'is the prettiest woman of her age I have seen in years.'

'But that daughter of hers!' cried Pheasant. 'I can't stand her. She takes care to let you know her gown comes from Paris.'

'Yes,' agreed Alayne; 'and she referred to London as "my London"!'

'Such swank!'

'Still,' protested Ernest, balancing himself on the balls of his feet, 'they are a charming family, the Leighs. And really intellectual.'

'I don't agree,' said Alayne. 'To me they seem very superficial.'

'To me too!' cried Pheasant.

Finch interrupted, hurt for his friend's sake. 'Not Arthur. Arthur's absolutely sound.'

'I'd like to give him a sound hiding,' observed Renny, lighting his pipe, 'and knock some of the effeminacy out of him.'

Alayne said, 'It was rather a nuisance Mrs. Lebraux not dancing. It kept one of the best dancers always at her side entertaining her.'

Neither Nicholas nor Ernest had sat by Mrs. Lebraux, consequently they felt a little irritated by this remark.

Ernest said, 'I talked to her for a moment, but she scarcely took the trouble to answer. I can't say I admire her.'

'I should n't have minded sitting by her for a bit,' said Nicholas, 'but she seemed not to lack attention.' He looked at Renny.

Renny looked back. 'Someone had to be decent to the poor woman. The girls were awfully cool to her.'

'I scarcely know her,' said Alayne.

'That is no reason why you should be cool to her,' returned Renny.

'She's one of those women,' asserted Pheasant, sagaciously, 'who don't care a bit about other women. She's simply *mad* about men!'

'How unjust you are,' said Renny. 'She's been in great trouble. She only liked to talk to me because she is used to me. I've been a friend of Lebraux.'

Piers said, 'I should n't mind the looks of her so much if only she'd darken her eyelashes and touch her hair up so it would be all one color.'

Renny turned on him angrily. 'She'd never do anything to her hair. She's not that sort. She never thinks of her personal appearance.'

His wife and his sister-in-law looked at him scornfully.

'Well, she spent about ten minutes on her face in the dressing-room!' cried Pheasant.

'Dear me,' said Ernest, 'what was she doing to it?'

'Wiping her tears away,' suggested Piers.

'Tears!' scoffed Pheasant. 'Mrs. Patch, who helped nurse Mr. Lebraux, told Mrs. Wragge that they quarreled half the time and the other half they did n't speak.'

'You've little to do,' said Renny, 'to be gossiping with the servants about Mrs. Lebraux.'

'I was n't gossiping. She just told me. And besides, you often repeat things that Rags tells you.'

The master of Jalna gripped his pipe and drew back his lips from his teeth. He could think of nothing to say, so he glared at her.

'She looks healthy,' said Nicholas.

'Such crude health lacks charm for me,' said Ernest.

'Renny only danced once this evening,' observed Pheasant, 'and that was with her child.'

'I had hoped,' said Alayne slowly, 'that no one had noticed that.'

'Heigho!' said Piers, in an endeavor to imitate his grandmother. 'I want something more to eat. I want it right away.'

His Uncle Ernest looked at him reprovingly. 'Is it possible, Piers, that you are mimicking my mother?'

'Oh, no,' answered Piers, innocently. 'Not consciously, at any rate. But I was thinking, just a moment ago, how much she would have enjoyed to-night, and I suppose the thought of her stayed in my head.'

He led the way to the dining room and got a decanter of whiskey and a siphon of soda water from the sideboard. He sat down by the table, which had been cleared and reduced to its normal size. Nicholas, Ernest, and Finch followed him.

The moon was sinking. Its last rays were shining into the dining room. Its light was enough for the business they had in hand there. Nicholas, unmindful of gout, had given himself up to it. Ernest, unmindful of indigestion, had given himself up to it. Piers, forgetful of wifely admonition, had given himself up to it. Finch, mindful of

his new estate, entered heart and soul into it. The decanter and the siphon, with amber and cold white lights in their respective parts, moved slowly around the table. The moonlight blotted age out of two faces and stamped age into two, so that the quartette appeared to be all of one age, and that was ageless.

Finch said, 'I wish one of you would tell me what it was I said that was so funny. They were making such a row when I sat down that it knocked it clean out of my head.'

'I can't remember,' answered Nicholas, 'but I know it was damned witty. In fact, I've never heard a better after-dinner speech.'

'Nor I,' agreed Ernest. 'Just the right amount of sentiment mixed with real wit. It's a special talent in itself, this after-dinner speaking.'

'I thought the rector spoke very well,' said Finch, judicially.

'Yes, he spoke very well. But you were better. I only wish I could remember just what it was you said at the last.'

'Something about the joy of living,' suggested Piers.

'Well, that's not very new,' said Finch, rather disappointed.

'Seems to be new to you!'

'Life,' said Nicholas, 'is experience.'

'I don't agree,' said Ernest. 'I think life is work.'

Finch half-filled his glass with Black and White and aimed a squirt of soda at it. 'I think, just among ourselves, that I may say that my aim is to live an unselfish life.'

'You could n't have a better,' commended Ernest. 'From my own experience I know that bringing happiness to others brings happiness to one's self.'

'I'm in dead earnest,' said Finch. 'I want to do something for each one of you, and that's a fact. Uncle Nick and Uncle Ernie, if I were to invite you to come on a trip with me to England at my expense, would you accept?'

'Delighted to accept,' answered Nicholas instantly.

Ernest reached across the table and took Finch's hand and shook it. 'Dear boy — dear boy —' was all he could say.

'It's settled then, is it? You two are coming with me to visit Aunt Augusta?'

Ernest squeezed the hand he held, the hour, his condition, the invitation, filling him with an almost overwhelming emotion. Nicholas accepted airily, as though he were bestowing a favor.

'I will take you to some of my old haunts in London,' he promised, straightening his shoulders and drawing his chin against his collar.

Both uncles then began to talk about the years they had spent in England, repeating, at first, incidents that the nephews had heard before, but as the night drew on, and as the decanter emptied, drawing from remote places in their memories events unrecalled in years, like forgotten birds' nests dragged forth from an old belfry, or rusty anchors drawn up from the deep.

Some of these memories were disgraceful, and in the telling of them the two elders became more and more youthful, breaking into sudden uncontrolled laughter, their speech falling into the catchwords of their day. The young men, on the contrary, grew graver and more judicial with each glass, looking as though they did not quite approve of the levity of the others, Finch even going to the length once of giving some sound advice. In order that he might hurt no one's feelings he addressed the advice to the siphon in a kind of chant, and when no one gave any heed to him he shed a few unnoticed tears.

But, when the moment came when sing they must, he was ready. Ernest, who loved very old songs, ballads, madrigals, and the like, began 'Sumer is icumen in,' in his still excellent voice. A tenor, a lusty barytone, and a bass joined in, with

'Loudly sing, cuckoo!
Grows the seed, and blows the mead,
And springs the wood anew.
Sing, cuckoo!
The ewe is bleating for her lamb;
Lows for her calf the cow.'

The bleating and the lowing, so loud and mellow, brought a fifth member of the family on the scene. This was Renny, clad in dressing gown and slippers. He stared at the revelers with ironical amusement.

'Well,' he said, 'you're a lovely-looking lot!'

The moon was gone, and the dawn creeping in showed them wan and disheveled in their evening clothes.

'You'll wake the women and the kids,' he said. 'They've been asleep for hours. Don't you think you've had enough?'

'I've made serious decision,' said Finch. 'What?'

'To go to bed.'

VI

Since the day Finch had announced his intention of going no more to the University, Renny, after his first outburst, had been cold toward him. Piers, on the other hand, had been warmer than ever before. But neither one would give him any advice about his money. If he approached Renny with, 'I say, George Fennel thinks I ought to invest something in New York stocks and not be satisfied with such a low rate of interest,' Renny would shrug and say, 'It's none of my business. Do as you like with it.' And he would turn away.

If Finch sounded Piers on the same subject, Piers would laugh and say, 'You're going to have the time of your young life, are n't you?' And if Finch persisted he might add, 'Well, George ought to know something about it — he's in the business. I should think it would be rather fun to speculate a bit.'

Finch felt like a half-fledged bird suddenly pushed from the nest. After being constantly supervised in his spending, ordered here and there, sometimes tyrannized over, this sudden thrusting on him of responsibility bewildered him, skimmed the cream of his pleasure in his inheritance.

It was as though they had formed a conspiracy against him. His uncles never referred to the money in his presence. It was as though they said, 'By hook or crook he got what we should have had. Now let us see what he will do with it.'

He had been almost frightened when the bank book had been put into his hand, when he had interviewed the bank manager and been shown the list of Gran's solid and conservative investments. But George had scoffed at them. George had said

that, aided by one versed in the fluctuations of the market, Finch might with 'speculation' double his fortune.

Alayne realized something of his bewilderment, his loneliness. They had several long talks. She felt anxiety at the thought of his giving up old Adeline's safe investments for more spectacular ones, on the advice of George Fennel. Yet, like Finch, she was carried away by the thought that he might greatly increase his capital by careful speculation. George had offered some tempting suggestions, and she had heard from American friends who had made large sums of late. Renny and Piers, the two uncles, Maurice Vaughan, were children, she thought, in matters of business. To be sure, the first two exhibited a certain shrewdness in their own province, but she had seen and heard so much of mismanagement at Jalna; there was no use in consulting them. And added to their incompetence was their disinclination even to speak of Finch's inheritance. They shied at the mention of it, as skittish horses will shy at their own gatepost.

Alayne took her own small capital, left her by her father, out of the government stocks where it had been invested, and bought Universal Autos with it.

When the stock began to rise steadily she could not resist telling Finch what she had done, and after that it was impossible for her to restrain him. But she made him tell Renny of the project. 'Invest it as you like,' Renny said, curtly. 'I don't know anything about stocks. I've never had anything to invest.' Finch knew that it was not jealousy that made Renny curt, but anger that he should have, at the instant of attaining his majority, refused to return to the University. This prompt refusal had symbolized, to Renny, the rejection by Finch of all further authority, of supervision by him as head of the clan.

How bitter Meg Vaughan would be, Alayne thought, if Finch were to lose even a small amount of money by following her example. Meg had always regarded her as an interloper, and to have some tangible injury to lay at Alayne's door would give her real satisfaction. Finch must go, therefore, and talk the matter over with the Vaughans.

He found his sister covering a cushion with new cretonne in a design of tulips and delphiniums. Her white hands moved softly above it like two plump pigeons in a gay bit of garden. She wore a pink and white chintz cap in Quakerish shape, which, she fancied, gave her the appearance of being hard at work. Vaughan, who made no pretense of working, lay stretched on a sofa reading a book on fox breeding. Since Lebraux had died, and there was a good chance that Mrs. Lebraux would give it up, he had entertained thoughts of buying her stock himself.

'Well, Finch dear,' exclaimed Meg, 'so you thought you would come to see me! It's about time. When I think how little I see of my brothers it makes me quite sad.' She held up her smooth face expectantly. 'Now tell me just what is going on at home. Getting ready for the trip, I suppose. To think that I have never been across to the Old Country, and now you — at your age! Able to travel as luxuriously as you like. And Uncle Nick and Uncle Ernest at their age! And all their expenses paid. And here are Maurice and I with the mortgage falling due!'

'Oh, well,' growled Vaughan, 'it can be renewed.'

It was not an auspicious moment, Finch thought, for asking advice about his own investments. He pulled at his lip doubtfully, then made up his mind not to broach the subject.

After a silence Meg said, wistfully, 'I suppose you would not care to take over the mortgage yourself?'

Finch stared, startled. 'Me? I've never thought about it.'

'Of course not.' She looked into his eyes, smiling at his boyishness. 'But mortgages are a good investment, aren't they, Maurice?'

'I wish I owned a few,' answered Maurice.

'What interest do you pay?' asked Finch.

'Seven per cent.'

'Great Scott! I get only four per cent on some of mine!'

'How much happier I should feel,' cried Meg, 'if you held the mortgage in place of the old wretch who does!'

'There would be no need for sentiment to

enter into it, on Finch's side,' put in Vaughan quickly. 'This is a valuable property. And bound to be more valuable. Look at the old Paige place that the Golf Club bought.'

Finch asked, nervously, 'What is the mortgage?'

'Fifteen thousand. At seven per cent — one thousand and fifty a year — paid half yearly.'

Meg sighed, 'And the old wretch is so detestable always!'

'Why?' asked Finch.

'Oh — I don't know —'

Maurice interrupted her. 'Meggie's too critical. He has rough manners; that's all that's really wrong. He's not such a bad old fellow.' Maurice dropped the book from his crippled hand and it fell to the floor. Meg frowned as he bent to pick it up.

Finch felt a glow of affection toward them as a couple, quite apart from his brotherly love for Meg. 'I'll do it!' he exclaimed. 'I'll take the mortgage over. But, look here, I'll not accept seven per cent. It's exorbitant. I'll not take more than five.'

'You darling!' cried Meg. She made as if to rise and go to him, but even in a moment of emotion such as this the effort was too great. Instead she said again, 'You darling!' and held out her arms to him.

Finch crossed to her rather shamefacedly. He did not want to be thanked. But it was wonderful, this doing things for people and benefiting himself at the same time.

Again Meg embraced him, pressed her plump lips on his. 'I don't believe we'll tell the others a thing about it,' she said. 'I do like privacy about my own affairs, don't you?'

'Rather,' said Finch.

They made all the arrangements, and when they were complete Finch sought advice on the subject of the New York stock. Meg and Maurice threw themselves into the discussion of it with enthusiasm. He would be a fool, they said, not to take advantage of such an opportunity.

'If Alayne,' said Meg, 'is going into it, you're safe. I never knew a more calculating person. To me she's the very embodiment of shrewdness.'

'She was n't very shrewd when she married Eden,' observed Maurice.

'Maurice, how can you say such a thing! If ever she showed shrewdness it was then! Who was she? Nobody! He took her out of an office and brought her to Jalna — to a life of ease. He made a *Whiteoak* of her!'

'He nearly broke her heart,' said Finch.

'Hearts like hers are n't so easily broken! They're too calculating. For my part I think she had her eye on Renny from the first. Poor lamb, he had n't a chance against her!'

The two men sighed simultaneously in the effort of picturing the red fox Renny as a helpless lamb.

Talking to Piers that afternoon, Finch could not forbear dropping a hint about the taking over of the mortgage on Vaughanlands. Piers was curious, and after binding him to secrecy Finch told all. Piers thought it a very good thing for both parties. 'But mind you make them toe the mark with the payments,' he advised. 'Maurice is more than a little slack in money matters. He owed me for two years for a Jersey bull he bought, and I only got the money lately by keeping right after him.'

Finch felt a little depressed at the prospect of keeping right after Maurice. The responsibility of wealth was beginning to weigh on him. He said, 'You've never told me what you would like in the way of a present. It would please me awfully to give you something. I hate not dividing things up a bit.'

'Oh, I'll think it over' — and Piers turned away.

Finch strode after him. 'You're not going to get out of it like this. Just tell me something you'd really like.'

'I've got everything I need.'

'But there *must* be something,' He went on complainingly, 'I don't know what's the matter with you chaps! You'd think the money was tainted — you're so shy of it!'

Piers stopped, and turned to Finch. 'Well, if you want to make me a present that won't break you, buy me a new motor car. The old one is literally falling to pieces, and as long as the engine has a kick in it Renny won't buy a new one.'

'Good!' cried Finch. 'I'm awfully glad you thought of that. And Pheasant will

enjoy it, too. Shall we go in to-morrow and choose one?’

Piers made short work of choosing a car. He knew exactly what he wanted, down to the smallest detail. How amazing, Finch thought, to know all that when you had had no earthly prospect of getting a new car!

They had taken the train to town and come home in the car. It would be hard to say which of them enjoyed the drive most — Finch, sitting with folded arms, feeling, he could not have told why, rather like a self-made man, rich enough at last to indulge in the pleasure of philanthropy; or Piers, with a small, set grin on his face.

They talked little on the way, but, by the time they reached Jalna, Finch had promised to reshingle the barn for Piers, and to build him an up-to-date piggery. It was understood that Piers was to repay the cost of this when he was able.

Everyone came out of the house to admire the new car. Pheasant and Mooney danced round it. He must be lifted into it and must sit with his little hands on the wheel. Pheasant put her arm about Alayne. ‘You must share it, too. The old car is a *disgrace*.’ Nicholas and Ernest were delighted at the thought of driving in such style to the train on their departure. There was nothing cheap about the car. It was a beauty, they agreed. But Wakefield was dubious.

‘I don’t believe,’ he said, ‘that my grandmother would approve. She never liked the old car. She thought buying it was a great waste of money.’

Piers answered, ‘She’s not here to worry over changes, and as for you, you shan’t ride in it, just for being cheeky.’

‘Still, I don’t think Gran would like her money to be spent on motor cars.’

‘Would you like your seat warmed?’

‘No.’ He edged away.

‘Well, shut up, then!’

As they reached the garage they saw Renny standing in the door of the stable. When he saw the new car he turned sharply away and disappeared.

At dinner, in the face of his forbidding expression, no one referred to the purchase. Only Wakefield, in every pause, made some pensive remark relating to the likes and dislikes of his grandmother.

VII

The day of leaving drew inexorably near. Then it dallied in a spell of heavy rainfall, seeming unreal and far off. Then it rushed upon them, giving them scarcely time for their last preparations.

The three who were going away took dinner at the Vaughans’. Meggie could not bear to part with them till tea time. When they returned to Jalna the new car was before the door, the hand luggage already placed in it. Everything was in a rush now.

Renny had not come in to tea. Finch asked, rather anxiously, where he was. Ernest explained, ‘He said good-bye to Nicholas and me before we went to Meggie’s. He said he might not be in to tea.’

‘But he did not tell me good-bye,’ stammered Finch. ‘Surely he would not let me go away without seeing me?’

‘Surely not!’ Ernest looked much concerned. ‘But there is no time for hunting him up. We must leave as soon as we have had our tea.’

‘I don’t want any tea!’ Finch set down his cup and rushed out of the house. He had a sense of panic.

Running toward the stables, he saw Wright in the act of backing the old car into the garage. He hesitated and Wright called out, ‘If you’re looking for Mr. Whiteoak, sir, he’s over at Mrs. Lebraux’s.’

Finch halted. ‘Wright, what’s the best time you can make to drive me there and back?’

‘I can get you there in five minutes, sir.’

Finch clambered into the car. He must see Renny! The others would just have to wait for him if he were late. There was plenty of time for catching the train. . . .

The place Antoine Lebraux had rented for his venture into fox breeding comprised about twenty acres, a wooden house painted a dingy white, a small stable, a poultry house, and the fragile outbuildings Lebraux had added. Finch pressed the electric bell twice without answer. Then he saw, stuck above it askew, a card with the words ‘Out of order.’ He knocked loudly. The minutes flew while he waited for some response, then a step sounded in the passage and a bolt was drawn. Good Lord, was Renny locked in there? The door opened and

Pauline Lebraux stood on the threshold. She looked half frightened at seeing him. She wore a black serge dress of scanty cut, and this, with her long black legs and dense dark hair standing out about her face, made her look strangely fragile and pathetic. On her arm she carried, like an infant, a sickly fox cub wrapped in flannel. Its bright eyes peered out at Finch with an expression abnormally intelligent. Her appearance was so singular to Finch that he forgot for a moment what his errand was.

'I'm going away,' he said.

He thought a shadow darkened her face, but she only smiled a little and said, 'Won't you come in?'

'Thanks, but I must n't. I'm in a rush to catch the train. I came to see if Renny is here.'

'Yes. He's with mother. Helping her with the foxes.'

Finch hastened to the back of the house. He heard voices in the little stable. How could he go there and call Renny's name, as though he were a child? He had a feeling of hot anger against Renny. He had a mind to return to Jalna without seeing him. But he had been seen from within. Renny appeared in the doorway, then came slowly toward him.

'Looking for me?' he asked.

'Did you suppose I'd go away without saying good-bye?' blazed Finch.

'How was I to know what you'd do? You do what you like.'

Finch was aghast. Was this the way they were going to part? If it were, it would spoil his trip. If he missed his train, if he missed the boat, he would stay here till he'd wrung something better than this taciturn coldness from Renny.

'What have I done? Why are you treating me like this?'

'Watch out! Mrs. Lebraux is in there — she'll hear you.'

'I'm missing my train, do you know that? Yet you won't say a friendly word to me! God, we might never meet again!'

'I hate saying good-bye.'

'But you said good-bye to Uncle Nick and Uncle Ernie. Why not me?'

'That's just it. I did n't so much mind saying good-bye to them.'

Finch's eyes searched the lean red face

before him. If that was the truth — and Renny was not a liar, and he was frightfully queer about some things — Oh, perhaps it was not so bad after all! Perhaps Renny did n't hate him — why, Renny had always kissed him when they parted, like a father! He looked into Renny's eyes, his face suddenly contorted in an effort to keep from crying. He put out his hand.

Renny took it and drew Finch toward him. He bent and kissed him in the old way. Finch sniffed the familiar smell of stable on him. A load rolled from his heart.

At Jalna he found the others in varying degrees of perturbation at his delay. Ernest was almost in despair, not able to keep still for a moment. Nicholas, solidly settled in the car, was uttering wrathful ejaculations. Pheasant was distraught. Piers said that it was almost more than he could do to keep his hands off him. Wakefield had brought out a pair of binoculars the better to watch for him, though the road was quite hidden from the drive by trees. It was one of the moments when Alayne felt that the White-oaks were almost beyond bearing. With a controlled expression she stood holding Mooey in her arms. Mooey was dubiously sucking his thumb, only taking it from his mouth at intervals to say, 'I'm not f'rightened.'

They caught the train, and that was all. The porter had barely disposed of their luggage, Piers had barely shaken hands all round, Pheasant kissed all round and exclaimed, 'Oh, how I wish I were going too!' when she and Piers had to get off. They stood on the platform together as the train drew out, their young faces upturned, she blowing a kiss to the three at the window, he bareheaded, a smile, in which there was a shadow of boyish envy of the adventurers, softening his face.

VIII

Augusta had dressed herself with even more care than usual on this afternoon. She arranged with even greater exactitude her hair, still worn in the fashion of Queen Alexandra, that curled fringe upon which her nephews had so often speculated, going to the length of making bets with each other as to whether it was her own and

natural in color, her own and dyed, or a transformation. Not one of them had ever found out. And if her brothers knew, they loyally kept the knowledge to themselves.

She surveyed herself in the long glass in her bedroom with inward satisfaction, but if an onlooker had been present he would have supposed that her reflection met with her complete disapprobation. She drew in her chin, stiffening the back of her neck, and widened her eyes into an expression of surprised offense. But this aspect was as natural to her as one of bold dominance had been to her mother. Her gaze appeared to be a defense against the object upon which she turned it, as old Adeline's had been one of challenging curiosity.

Augusta was little changed since her mother's death. She had, in truth, improved in appearance.

The last visit to Jalna, which had been prolonged to three years, had been something of a strain for her, enduring, as she had, the old lady's caprices and quips at her expense, and continually expecting that so long delayed death. The lively commotion of the household had also been rather exhausting to a woman herself long past seventy. The return to the serenity of her own house, where there were none to contradict her without running the risk of losing their situations, and nothing more exciting than the misbehavior of maids, was a benefit to her health.

So, with inward satisfaction and outward disdain, she put the finishing touches to her toilette, noted her still shapely shoulders and the unimpaired arch of her Court nose. Her complexion had always been bad, so in that respect she had had nothing to lose.

She went the rounds of the rooms prepared for her brothers and nephew, saw that the ewers were full of fresh water, clean towels on the racks, and sniffed the pleasant scent of lavender from the bed linen.

She descended to the drawing-room, where the tea table, an hour late in agreement with the arrival of the train, had just been arranged by the parlor maid, Ellen. Would there be enough scones? Was one square of honey in the comb sufficient? She remembered Finch's appetite, how she had always tried to put flesh on him and failed. Well, at any rate there was plenty

of bread and butter, and the fruit cake was unusually deep.

She went to a window and looked across the spring greenness of the lawn and park to where she could see the road climbing upward from the village. Only one vehicle was in sight — the cart of Jim Johnson, the carrier, returning after one of his two weekly trips to Exhampton. She waited there a few minutes, but she could not be quiet for long. She was too restlessly awaiting the arrival. It would be so nice to see them.

A week ago she had had everything ready to receive them when a telegram had come to say that they were remaining another seven days in London. It was so like Nicholas to have sent it at the last minute. He and Ernest had not been to visit her since her husband's death. On their last visit they had quite tired out Sir Edwin by talking so much, and being so late to meals, and disagreeing with him, as he said to her afterward, on every subject he brought up. Well, he was safely at rest in the family vault now, and the years had made her brothers more amenable.

As for Finch, he was now her favorite nephew. Eden had been once, because of his charm, his good manners, his talents; but he was behaving altogether too badly. She loved Renny, but he had inherited several of Mamma's most regrettable traits. Piers was a splendid young fellow, but sometimes surly and with quite rough manners, caused, she supposed, by association with grooms and laborers. Wakefield was a darling and quite companionable for his years, but there was something about Finch that made her feel almost maternal.

She began to be really annoyed at the lateness of the arrival of her relatives. She sat down by the table, however, and held herself together. The firelight (an unnecessary extravagance, for the afternoon was still warm) played over the folds of her black satin dress and maliciously accentuated a dark mole on her left cheek.

A step sounded in the hall and a small spare woman appeared in the doorway. She was Mrs. Thomas Court, Augusta's cousin by marriage. Her husband had been a son of old Adeline's youngest brother. She had lived, since her marriage, in Ireland, but had remained in all respects Eng-

lish, as Augusta was inherently English though brought up in Canada. She advanced into the room in a quick, jerky walk like a little wound-up figure. Her hair, dragged back from the forehead, vied with Augusta's in purplish darkness. She had a complexion even more sallow, but she brightened it with two spots of rouge, and her dress, though ornate and old-fashioned, was sprightly. Her features were small, her light gray eyes intense, and the expression of her thin-lipped mouth one of unyielding conceit. Mingled with these qualities was a kind of jaunty good humor. She walked straight to the window, with a side glance at the tea table.

Outdoors a shadow had fallen.

'Is it raining?' asked Augusta.

'Just beginning to spot,' replied Mrs. Court, her eyes on the paved terrace.

'I wish it would rain. The flowers need it.'

'I hope it does n't. Dry weather agrees with me much better. It suits my ear.'

'How is your ear?'

'Going chug-chug, the same as ever.'

Augusta deepened her contralto tones. 'Dear me, how very irritating!'

Mrs. Court wheeled and stared at her. 'Irritating does n't express it at all; it's maddening.'

She advanced, with a businesslike air and squeaking boots, to the tea table. She pointed with a knuckle forefinger at the plate of scones. 'Give me one of those and a cup of tea, and I'll carry them to my room. Relations don't want outsiders poking noses into their reunions.'

'I have n't rung for the tea yet. And your leaving us is quite unnecessary.'

'Very well.' She sat down on an unyielding chair with buttoned-in upholstery. 'But you'll not be able to make so free with each other.'

'There is no need to make free,' said Augusta, rather stiffly.

Mrs. Court played a tattoo on the floor with her heels. 'It makes me jumpy,' she explained, 'to go so long without my tea.'

Augusta regarded her with disapproval. 'Where is Sarah?' she asked, in order to take her cousin's mind off her stomach.

Mrs. Court tattooed harder than ever. 'Out in the rain. The girl's mad. She

quite likes to get wet. And when the sun is shining she's as likely as not moping in the house. I call her Mole. My pet Mole.' She wagged her head, in recognition of her own wit.

'She is a very sweet girl,' said Augusta, 'mole or no mole. And I only hope she and Finch will make friends.'

'No boy of twenty-one will ever give a second thought to her. She's too quiet. Boys like romps. Sometimes I call her Mouse, my pet Mouse.'

Augusta was listening to a sound outside. 'Here is the car!' she cried, and hurried to meet them.

Mrs. Court squeaked, with even more alacrity, to the bell cord and gave it a tug.

'Bring in the tea,' she said to the maid, 'and we'd better have an extra pot.' She stood stock-still then, in the corner, watching the embraces of the family.

Augusta turned to her at last. 'Oh, you have rung for tea! Now you must come and speak to my brothers and nephew. Of course you remember Nicholas and Ernest.'

They shook hands, recalling how the last time they had met had been in London during the Coronation ceremonies of King George.

'Dear Edwin was alive then,' said Augusta.

'Thomas was alive, too,' said Mrs. Court, not to be outdone.

They settled about the tea table, and Augusta noted how well her brothers looked, but she was a little disappointed in Finch's appearance. He had the same half-starved look. It was rather hard to reflect that this lanky youth was the possessor of her mother's fortune, when it would have graced so well Ernest's courtly presence. Not a large fortune, but how important in a family of such restricted means! Yet when Finch, sitting close beside her on a chair too low for him, gave her one of his affectionate looks, her heart warmed toward him and she plied him with buttered scones. She gave him more tea, and he whispered, 'I say, where's the girl?'

Augusta looked mysterious. 'She's like you; she's devoted to Nature. She forgets all about her meals!'

'That's a lot like me!' And he helped himself to more honey.

'I hope,' he added, 'that she does n't look like her mother.'

'Sh.'

'But they're talking to her, one in each ear. She could n't possibly hear me.'

'That is her aunt by marriage. Sarah is an orphan and has been brought up by Mrs. Court. I must tell you about her father later.'

A shower was now beating against the panes. As though coming directly out of it, Sarah Court appeared in the doorway and came slowly toward the group about the tea table.

What had Finch expected? An impetuous Irish girl, late for tea because she liked being out in the wet? A curly-haired sprite, dancing in with rain-dappled cheeks? A sturdy, matter-of-fact young person? Whatever he had vaguely expected, it was certainly not this.

She came with a long, slow gait that imparted almost no motion to the upper part of her body. That part, held with an erectness unknown to the present generation, moved like the torso of a statue carried on a float. Her dark dress was open at the throat, but buttoned tightly down the front with the effect of an old-fashioned basque, having also the effect of that garment in a short continuation below the waist. Her skirt was too long for fashion, and was arranged at the back in a manner suggestive of a bustle. Her arms were held rigidly at her sides; her hands had an extraordinary pallor. This pallor was equaled in the profile turned toward Finch. Her black hair was brushed back from her high forehead in glossy smoothness, and worn in a heavy braided coil at the nape.

Finch stood staring at her, unable to detach his mind. She came to him, however, holding out her hand. Even as they shook hands he did not see her. His consciousness was occupied in the attic at Jalna. He saw himself in the lumber room on a rainy day, crouching by the window, absorbed in old copies of *Punch* taken from a toppling dust-covered pile that year by year increased, for none were ever thrown away. He was looking at the picture of a Victorian drawing-room in which a whiskered gentleman was bowing over the hand of a lady. Other ladies were standing by.

They were all alike, and each and all bore a striking resemblance to Sarah Court.

That was it! She was like a drawing by Du Maurier.

He was so relieved by the discovery that he smiled delightedly at her. She smiled back, and he saw how the thin, delicate lips parted, showing unexpectedly small, even teeth. He thought he had never seen an upper lip so short, a chin so jutting.

Mrs. Court was saying, 'Well, Mole! So you've come out, now that the sun is gone!'

Sarah Court's lips closed tightly. She fixed her eyes on a ring with a large green stone which she began nervously to twist on her forefinger.

Her aunt leaned forward, as though she would pry under the lowered lids.

'Well, Mouse! Quiet as ever?' She turned to Ernest.

'I call her Mouse, she's so silent. It's very irritating to me when I've no other companion.'

Nicholas said, 'Many years ago there was a girl we called Mouse. She was a ballet dancer.'

'Was she quiet?' asked Mrs. Court.

'No, she was rather noisy. But she'd a peaky little face, and small bright eyes.'

'I enjoy a good ballet,' said Mrs. Court, 'but I've no pleasure in the Russian ballet. I hate Russian music. It's nothing but a fantastic noise compared with Bach, or Handel, or Mozart. When Sarah begins to do the rough-and-tumble of it on her fiddle I get out of the room. It gives me the fidgets.' And she played a tattoo with her heels to show how really fidgety she could become.

She turned to Finch. 'We must get you playing. We'll make a musical time of it.'

She talked of music she had heard in the principal capitals of Europe. 'But I can't afford to travel now,' she said. 'I just stick at home in Ireland. Mouse and I make our own music. Don't we, Mouse?'

How ludicrous, Finch thought, to call that remote-looking girl Mouse! He got up his courage and said, 'You play the violin awfully well, I expect.'

Her aunt had received no answer to her question and had apparently expected none, for she continued to talk without

hesitating; but Sarah turned to Finch with a peculiar smile, with a certain elfish mischief in it, and answered, 'You'll know that when you hear me.'

It was the first time he had heard her say more than a monosyllable. Her voice, he thought, was the very distillation of sweetness, all the more noticeable following, as it did, the gruff tones of her aunt. And it had a muted sound, as though a secret being within her spoke for her. He tried to draw her into conversation, but he was awkward and she was either shy or aloof.

He was glad to escape into the garden when the others went to their rooms. Lyming Hall was an unpretentious house of no particular period, but its gardens, lawns, and park were kept in excellent order. Augusta was proud of the commanding view over the countryside. The fact that there were no large landowners about and few people of wealth gave her a pleasant feeling of superiority.

Finch wandered among the flower beds, discovered the tennis court, the rosary, and walked down the drive, which sloped steeply, to the gate. There was a small gabled lodge half hidden in roses, so much like a picture of a little English house that Finch had to grin with delight as he looked at it. He turned away when he saw a woman in the door and cut across a corner of the park to where he could see the stable.

He found the kitchen garden — strawberries under netting, and gooseberries like eggs. He came upon a door in a wall, almost hidden in ivy, and pushed it open. He found himself in a walled flower garden.

He went up and down the box-bordered paths, a lanky figure filled with the joy of being alive in that warm sweet-scented enclosure. He squatted to look into Canterbury bells. He held moss roses in his hand. He put his long nose to the very earth to smell the mignonette. The pear trees, trained against the wall, were beautiful to him. At that moment the orchard of pear trees at Jalna, which carelessly covered the ground with golden fruit every fall, seemed a poor thing. He could not decide which roses were the most beautiful — the newly opened ones, their inner petals still resisting the fingers of the sun, or those at that mysterious moment of perfection just before

they fade and fall, when they seem to be offering their essence in a final surrender so complete as to have something of delicate vehemence in it.

When Ellen showed him his room he was glad to find that its windows overlooked the walled garden. There was a can of hot water, and his clothes were laid out ready for him on the bed. He felt very happy. He had had no idea it would be so nice at Aunt Augusta's. He wished that Mrs. Court and her niece were not there, so that they might be just a family party. . . . Still, after all, Sarah Court was his cousin. But how strange and unapproachable she was! And she had a baffling charm for him. As he stood looking out of the window his thoughts, like curious birds, hovered about her.

He was still looking down into the garden, where a violaceous shadow had tempered all the brightness, when a light tap sounded on the door. Augusta's voice asked, 'Are you dressed, dear? May I come in?'

He threw open the door and stood guiltily before her.

'I say, Aunt, I'm awfully sorry! I have n't begun to dress; I've just been staring into the garden. You should n't have given me a room with a window overlooking it.'

She sailed with kindly majesty into the room.

'I am so glad you like it,' said Augusta; but she spoke abstractedly. She went back to the door, closed it, then sat down on the settee at the foot of the bed. She had on a black dinner dress and wore her old-fashioned jewelry that was beginning to be fashionable again. She raised her large eyes to Finch's face and said, in a tone almost tragic, 'Finch, I am in great trouble.' Her voice sounded a barytone depth.

The thought of anyone's being in trouble terrified him. He was used to trouble, Heaven knew, but his hair seemed to rise at the mere mention of it. 'Oh — what's up, Aunt?'

'Eden,' she boomed, 'is sitting on the doorstep.'

He had an instant mental picture of Eden, rather down-at-heel but debonair, with that insolent, veiled smile of his, lounging on the door sill.

'That girl,' proceeded Augusta, 'is with him.'

So Eden and Minny were both sitting on the doorstep! He could only get out, 'Well, well.'

But his look of consternation was sufficient to satisfy his aunt of his sympathy.

'They are,' she said, 'living in the lodge.'

The lodge! And he had walked down to it not an hour before! Perhaps the woman he had seen in the doorway was Minny.

'But how did they get there?' he asked.

'By effrontery. As they get everywhere. You know I am attached to Eden. I cannot help being attached to Eden. But to have him come and sit on my doorstep, when I have Mrs. Court and Sarah in the house, is too much.'

'But how did they come there? And when?' Life seemed one long surprise for him. Now he asked himself, as he had asked about so many things, Can this be true?

Augusta said, 'They have been there a week. Eden turned up a month ago alone. She was somewhere in the offing, awaiting her chance to creep on to my doorstep. He told me that he was completely out of funds, and he asked me if he might not come and live at the lodge. I told him that the widow of the late lodge keeper lived there alone. She paid me no rent, but I had been very fond of him, and after his death I let her live on there. She often came and helped about the house. Now what do you suppose Eden's remark was after I had told him all this? His remark was, "Can't you turn the widow out?" Did you ever hear of anything more cold-blooded?'

'It was terrible,' agreed Finch.

'It was barbarous; not only the words, but the way he uttered them. Just a casual, "Can't you turn the widow out?" As though it were the turning of a hen out of a coop. I spoke impressively to him. I said, "Eden, I never thought that I should live to see the day that a Whiteoak and a Court would suggest that a widow be turned out of doors. Whatever our faults may have been, we have been benevolent."'

'What did he say to that?'

'He said nothing. He just gave that rather tired smile of his and began to talk

about his poetry. He does write really beautiful poetry, you know.'

'And what then?'

'After he'd had tea he went away. What was my astonishment, in less than a fortnight, when the widow's daughter, who lives in Plymouth, wrote to her mother asking her to come to Plymouth to live. She is going to have another child, and takes in lodgers, so it was altogether too much for her.'

'And did the widow go?'

'She went. And she had only been gone two days when Eden sauntered into the garden, where I was cutting roses, and said, "Well, we've settled in." "Settled in!" I almost shouted it. "Who has settled in?" "Me and Minny," he said. Just like that, without grammar or consideration. Then he said, "We heard the widow had got out, so we've moved in." I shouted, "You've moved into the lodge! You?" And he said, "Yes, Minny and me." And there they've remained.'

'What are you going to do about it?'

'I don't know, I'm sure. I thought perhaps you could help me. I'm afraid that if I tell your uncles they may be too severe with him. He is such a sweet boy. Clever, like you—only so much more—' She hesitated.

'Yes, I know,' said Finch.

'I should n't mind in the least their occupying the lodge for a time, if only they were married, though Minny does look very odd since she's taken to painting her ears.'

'Painting her ears!'

'Yes. She puts a dab of paint on the lobe of each ear. I suppose it's living in France.'

'Well, well,' said Finch again. He felt as though life were really crowding too furiously on him. He asked, 'Do the people about here know that they are not married?'

'No one knows but Mrs. Court. We have, so far, kept the fact of their existence from Sarah. Her aunt is very particular about Sarah's acquaintances.'

'She is rather a strange girl, Aunt Augusta.'

'You will not think her so strange when you are used to her. . . .'

(To be continued)

THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

Robert Whitcomb has been engaged in newspaper work in and near New York for ten years. The loss of his job, in January 1930, started him upon his enforced tour of the country which he records in 'The New Pilgrim's Progress.' **Charles D. Stewart** is Wisconsin's natural philosopher. Δ Like Francis Parkman, **Seth K. Humphrey** is a New England historian and author who has always been fascinated by the Indians of the Western plains. His latest book, *Following the Prairie Frontier*, which includes the exciting episode he here describes, will be published in May by the University of Minnesota Press. **Robert Dean Frisbie** is living the life of Rousseau's 'natural man' in Tahiti. From Papeete comes a letter from him telling how he happened to write 'The Ghost of Alexander Perks, A.B.' He says: 'About a year ago I was dining unwisely though well with Captain Viggo of the trading schooner *Tiare*, and after the liqueurs I was inspired to tell a story. I told of the ghost on Vostok Island, making up the story as I went along. From then on, Viggo gave me no peace until I wrote it down.' **Willa Cather** is — well, Willa Cather.

Albert Jay Nock is an American scholar whose refuge from the U. S. A. is commonly Belgium. **James Merriam Moore** is a major in the Army War College at Washington. **Arthur Colton** is a novelist and critic, a frequent contributor to literary reviews. **Frances Taylor** holds an executive position in a large advertising agency. Δ Born in China, the daughter of missionary parents, **Ida Pruitt** is reputed to know more about the way the yellow half of the world lives than any other 'foreigner' in the land. She is now head of the Social Service Department of Peking Union Medical College. Δ A biography of **A. W. Smith** would be a compendium of rare adventure in the far places of the earth. After years of service in the British Army he became general manager of a vast lumber organization in Rangoon; he now makes his home near Boston. **Eleanor Risley** lives on the banks of the Ouachita. She knows as friends and neighbors the folk of whom she writes in 'Drought.' **George J. Anderson** is

president of the great Consolidation Coal Company in New York. **Horace W. Foskett** is assistant treasurer of the Equitable Life Insurance Company of Iowa, where his work, he says, has impressed him 'with the need for a sound economic policy for this country.'

Mazo de la Roche wrote 'Finch's Fortune' at her cottage in Devonshire; now that the book is finished, she is making a tour of the Continent. Those readers who missed the last issue of the *Atlantic*, which contained the opening installment, may 'catch it on the run' by glancing through the following synopsis: —

The time of the story is the present; the scene, Jalna — a large country house in Ontario, built in 1850 by Captain Philip Whiteoak. Here live Captain Whiteoak's two surviving sons, Nicholas and Ernest, now old men, with their nephews, who are the sons of their dead brother Philip. Of these the oldest, Renny, is head of the clan — a passionate horseman and farmer about forty years of age. He has recently married Alayne Archer, a somewhat prim and intellectual New Yorker, the divorced wife of his half brother Eden, a poet, who ran away with his sister's nursemaid, Minny Ware, and is now in Europe. A third brother, Piers, husband of Pheasant and father of young Mooney, is Renny's right-hand man in the management of the estate — a difficult job, owing to the family's rather extravagant way of living and to the fact that old Mrs. Whiteoak, instead of leaving her fortune to one of her sons, or to Renny, for the upkeep of the family as a whole, willed it to her grandson Finch, who is on the eve of his twenty-first birthday when the story opens. Finch is a sensitive musician, somewhat appalled at the riches he is about to inherit. Wakefield, a delicate and precocious boy of fourteen, is the last of the brothers. The only sister, Meg, older than Renny, is married to a neighboring farmer, Maurice Vaughan, and has one little girl.

The birthday dinner party at Jalna, with which the present installment opens, shows clearly the characteristics of the family's various members.

Robert Whitcomb's graphic account of his ten-month pilgrimage in search of work translates into its stark human terms one of the prices we are now paying for the late lamented 'Coolidge prosperity.' That such conditions as he describes can be met with in the richest

country of this twentieth-century world is a fact to challenge the leadership of American business to seek some enduring remedy for the ills of our industrial civilization. It is a heartening sign of the times that business men generally are beginning to realize that theirs is the responsibility to find a solution. Two other articles in this issue, both by business men, indicate that this is so — 'Nobody's Business,' by George J. Anderson, and 'Falling Prices,' by Horace W. Foskett.

Throughout the Middle Ages the periodic plagues that swept over Europe, trailing death, desolation, and despair in their wake, were looked upon as acts of God. At last, however, the genius of medicine discovered the causes of disease and ended the terrors of the Black Death. In modern times the plagues that afflict us are these cyclical seizures of economic paralysis whose causes, still obscure, must be probed and removed. Eras of unprecedented prosperity give way to interims of world-wide depression. Machines hum merrily, turning out a superabundance of goods the like of which mankind has never seen before; then, suddenly, something happens — the wheels stop turning, mills are closed, millions are thrown out of work through no fault of their own. They are left to face starvation and cold, while — and perhaps because — warehouses are bursting with food, clothing, necessities of every description.

The Ancient Mariner knew the torture of 'water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink'; the modern victim of industrialism knows the torture of poverty provoked by riches, of want induced by plenty. This paradox poses a pressing social problem which men of light and leading will not, indeed cannot, ignore. The genius of modern business must attempt a solution. But how? The keynote of every scientific experiment is control, and the simple fact of our economic life is that the necessity of self-preservation puts pressure upon every business executive to control his own enterprise. But in the very process of trying to control their individual ventures, business men create a larger something which is beyond their immediate control — namely, the general business situation. It gets out of hand continually to roll up successive waves of feverish activity and dull stagnation. The most urgent need of the times is to learn how to harness the wild forces of collective business and flatten out the exaggerated curves of the business cycle.

The two business articles which the *Atlantic*

publishes this month are but the forerunners of others to follow by outstanding industrialists, bankers, economists, and engineers — all looking toward a solution of this national problem.

Bureaucracy in France.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

You are to be commended for publishing Mr. Lawrence Sullivan's searching articles on American bureaucracy. A letter in your April Contributors' Column caught him up on a few minor details, but his general charge still stands. Everyone who has ever had to do business with the petty officials in any government bureau will recognize the essential features of the picture as he has painted it. He shows that each little bureaucrat, his mental horizon bounded by departmental rules which have narrowed down from precedent to precedent, tends to become a court of last resort from which there is no appeal. It is a governmental disease, a species of dry rot that flourishes in the musty atmosphere of officialdom everywhere. Washington seems to be peculiarly subject to it, but then so is London, Paris, Berlin, Rome — even lusty Moscow. Nor is it a modern disease, as we sometimes like to think. Dickens was a hundred years ahead of Mr. Sullivan in lampooning the absurdities of the eternal 'Circumlocution Office.'

To-day the most powerful bureaucracy in the world, this side of Moscow, is probably to be found in the highly centralized government of France. Madariaga has pointed out that there is a peculiar something in the genius of each nation which forces it to express itself in a characteristic way, no matter how the external forms may change. So in France. Louis XIV is dust, but his spirit lives on forever in each petty official of the republic, who acts upon the principle, *L'état c'est moi*. One episode from my personal experience will illustrate how thoroughly these French bureaucrats have succeeded in complicating the citizen's simplest relations to the state.

Several years ago I chanced to buy an automobile in Lyons. That, you will agree, is an elemental transaction — at least, so I thought until I had paid for the car and began to find out some of the things I should have to do before I could make use of it. First I had to go with the dealer to the prefecture and register the change in ownership. In my best French I swore that I, Marlowe Harris, had that day purchased from M. Claude Arnot a Renault roadster, engine number such and such, for the sum of fifteen thousand francs in cash paid. This oath was administered by a *mutilé* — a brisk little clerk who had lost his right arm in the war and who, as the sequel proved, stood ready to sacrifice his left, if need be, to preserve inviolate the order of ceremonies laid down for cases like mine.

I had bought the car because I wanted to see as much of southern France as I could in a very limited

THE ENGLISH MEASURE WEALTH IN TERMS OF INCOME

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time. Unfortunately, I had left my New York driving license at home and I knew that I should have to take a test. So I explained my situation to the official and told him that I should appreciate anything he could do to expedite my departure from Lyons. In precise, clipped syllables he said that everything would follow in due course and that I would please report for a driving test one week hence. He gave me a little leaflet which described in technical French all the parts of an automobile and how they function, and warned me that my test would include an oral examination upon its contents. There was nothing to do but accept the situation. The next six days I spent memorizing the cumbersome French names for all the parts of a motor car.

When I reported for my driving test, I was met by no less a personage than a professor in the School of Mines. It puzzled me to see any connection between geology and automobiles, but this was quickly explained. It seems that when automobiles were invented the government decided to turn them over to the department which had the least work to do. This was the Bureau of Mines, and the arrangement has continued in force to this day. So it was that a professor from the School of Mines left his classes in the middle of the morning to drive with me through the streets of Lyons and ask me questions about the steering apparatus, the carburetor, and the brakes.

This ordeal ended, I thought I was through; as a matter of fact, I had only just begun. I was told that I must now return to the prefecture and apply for my *carte blanche* — the official driver's license. This I did, and when I had filled it out and presented the professor's report upon my test, the same little one-armed clerk said that the prefect would have to sign it and that I could call for it the next day. The following afternoon I came for it and was about to bow my way out of the office when the official stopped me. 'You must now apply for the *carte rouge*,' he said. So I filled out another form and was again instructed to come back the next day for the prefect's signature.

I asked how many cards I should have to obtain and was told that there were also the *carte grise*, the *carte bleue*, the *carte jaune*, and several others whose colors I forget. One was an identification card, another was a *permis de circulation*; the precise function of the rest has long since escaped my memory, but the clerk made it clear that they were all necessary documents and that no one could operate an automobile in France without them. Could n't I apply for them all at once and get it over with? No, I could not; they had to be applied for in proper sequence and I should have to come back an innumerable number of 'next days' for the prefect's signature.

The prefect's office was in the next room and I could hear him talking through the partly open door, but he might as well have been in Paris as far as I was concerned; he signed all cards at a particular hour each morning and could not be bothered with them at any other time. In desperation I again

mentioned the urgency of my case and asked if something could n't be done. No, nothing could be done; this was the regular procedure to which all French citizens had to accommodate themselves; no exceptions could be made for foreigners.

I saw that I was doomed to spend the rest of my vacation in Lyons unless I took heroic measures, so I called upon the American consul for help. To make a long story short, he telephoned the prefect and asked him as a personal favor to do what he could for me. That was enough; I was at last able to drive off exactly two weeks from the day on which I had bought the car. My vacation was ruined, but I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had cut the red tape in half; I learned that it usually requires a month to obtain all the documents that a Frenchman must carry about his person when he is rash enough to drive an automobile. Such is bureaucracy in France. I doubt if Mr. Sullivan has discovered anything in Washington to equal it.

MARLOWE HARRIS

The seasoning of an old salt.

DUTCH FLAT, CALIFORNIA

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

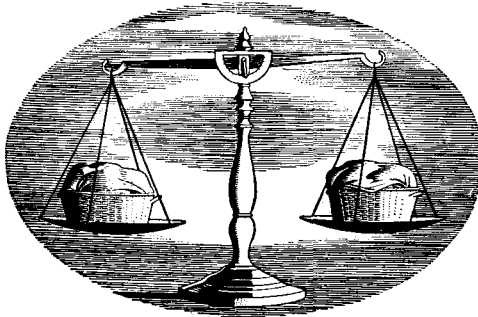
Mr. Harvey Wickham, in his 'Tags' in the March number, says that no one ever reads *Pilgrim's Progress* all the way through. I must ask your permission to contradict him.

I was 'raised' by a stern spinster lady who was born and brought up in New England. At Christmas time I used to hang up my stocking. When I was still a very small boy my aunt told me that I was now too old to do this any longer. I have had a good many blows in my life, but I do not remember anything that so numbed me as this, for, though the contents of my stocking were never very exciting, it was always with a great deal of hope that I looked forward to emptying it. The Christmas Eve on which I went to bed under this interdict was bitterly cold. Snow lay deep upon the ground. I remember it all distinctly. Polly Dobbins, the hired girl, was afflicted with chilblains. St. Nicholas, my aunt's pug dog, instead of sleeping on the covers at the foot of her bed, slept in it.

When I came down to breakfast that Christmas morning, I found beside my plate a large book. It was *Pilgrim's Progress*. I read it through, and have since reread it — every word. I will not descant upon my opinion of the book except to say that if I had been Christian I would have stayed at the Slough of Despond and caught frogs. I think Mr. Wickham owes me an apology.

BILL ADAMS

P. S. — I know that you New England people are apt to be a little sensitive about the rigors of which you are often accused, so I ought to add that these things did not happen in New, but in Old, England. Polly Dobbins was a little rosy-cheeked English girl. St. Nicholas was an English pug. Polly Dobbins made nine pounds a year and was engaged to



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Please print your name and address completely

a man named Martin Luther Jones, who was a hedger and ditcher. She was still engaged to him when I was a lad grown and went away to sea. They had been engaged for fourteen years when Martin Luther Jones died and was buried. This has nothing at all to do with *Pilgrim's Progress*, of course — and yet, in a certain way it has. Thinking of it all reminds me of Mary Lewellyn, the old Welsh woman who came in to help with the washing and was always so very kind to me. She was a widow woman and wore a high Welsh bonnet. She and her man had been engaged for twenty-two years before they were married. Soon afterwards her man died. Their one son died on a battlefield years before I was born. On the night before I went away to sea Mary Lewellyn told me to kneel, and as I knelt down before her she gave me her blessing. Long afterwards, when I was a man grown and came in from sea, I used to go to her little cottage to visit her. I kissed her old, wrinkled, brown cheek.

I beg your pardon for wandering like this. Please excuse an old sailor, who has read every last word of *Pilgrim's Progress* — no, not every last word, for the road is not yet done. Perhaps, after all, Mr. Wickham is right in a manner of speaking.

‘Death on an Atoll.’

WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

This letter will serve to register my profound disapproval of the policy of your magazine in publishing a story such as ‘Death on an Atoll’ in which the plot is based upon the tragic experience of a degenerate. It is generally known, of course, that such unfortunate persons do exist, but it would appear that there are sufficient wholesome and natural plots of much greater genuine interest that can be used. I am no Puritan and hold no brief for those who would eliminate all realism from writing, but I do believe that it is unfortunate for a publication of the standing of the *Atlantic Monthly* to publish a story of this character.

GRANT CHANDLER

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

As a psychiatrist, I was immensely interested in James Norman Hall's story, ‘Death on an Atoll,’ in the March issue. I have met with this baffling problem in a professional way many times, and have always been saddened by the tragedy of the individual case because of the present hopelessness of a remedy or even partial relief. In the case of a high-minded, sensitive person, the solution has always seemed to me the austere life of the ascetic, verily a mortification of the flesh. That this might be more perfectly accomplished by a voluntary isolation, a taking up of the existence of a hermit, had never occurred to me in connection with such tragedies. Mr. Hall's treatment of the situation so fully accords with my opinion of the ideal attitude of a Stoic philosopher (perhaps difficult or impossible to the ordi-

nary person) that I want to tell you and Mr. Hall of my appreciation of your excellent presentation of such a theme.

R. B. W.

Coddling our ‘infant’ industries.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

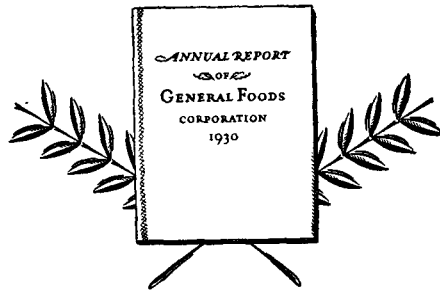
In his article on ‘Our Tariff Swaddling Clothes,’ in March, Mr. Knollenberg omitted to mention one of the effects of our high tariff which cannot fail to impress every American woman when she goes into the market for certain kinds of goods. I refer to the undeserved advantage given by the tariff to the American maker of goods which are better made abroad than here. Because his market is guaranteed to him, the American manufacturer does not need to keep up to date, to make his product interesting and attractive; he is not obliged to bring it up to the standard of the rest of the world. Originality, good taste, accuracy, all are superfluous to the man who knows he can always sell what he makes even if it is far inferior to the foreign product, so long as his government is ready to impose a fine on all who buy the foreign product.

If I wish to buy good black pins I must ask for Kirby Beard's, as my grandmother did. If I wish to have scissors that will continue to cut, or a brush with bristles that will not soften at once, I must buy those of foreign make. My chief quarrel with the tariff framers is that they make it unnecessary for American manufacturers to improve their methods, to work up to the European standard, which of course they could do. We do indeed keep our ‘infant industries’ in swaddling bands long after they have grown up; so they become timid or lazy and refuse to face competition and stand on their own merits.

The great majority of housewives in this country are people of very moderate means and must think carefully of prices when they select curtains, chintzes, linens, wall papers, chinaware. Every woman of taste knows that when she goes shopping for her household furnishings and picks out a pretty, clear, artistic design it will inevitably prove to be imported and twice the price of the vague, muddy, uninteresting stuff she is obliged to buy. Why should the American wall-paper manufacturer bother to employ designers with taste when he knows he can sell oceans of stupidly decorated paper? The other day I asked for white piqué, and when I exclaimed at the price I was told that it was imported. Apparently American cotton manufacturers will not trouble to make piqué, but insist that we buy something else that they do make, or pay for our willfulness.

It is strange that we should deliberately make it impossible for the great majority of ourselves to possess the desirable things which even the moderately well-off of other countries may freely enjoy. It is strange that we should continue to accept the ugly and the shoddy and the carelessly made, when

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our manufacturers could, if they would, supply us with wares quite as acceptable as those we get from abroad.

ALICE HAMILTON, M.D.

Architecture as 'beauty in use.'

STONY HILL, JAMAICA

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

Mr. Chester Henry Jones's article in the January issue, entitled 'Architecture Astray,' should form a much-needed corrective to the popular slavish adherence to 'period' architecture. But the author's desire to emphasize the essential utility of architecture has resulted in his neglecting, if he does not deny, the æsthetic nature of that art from which it is indissoluble.

With the exception of the non-creative revival of earlier forms removed from their proper spheres, which have been with us like the poor ever since the Renaissance, and of which perhaps the most horrible examples are to be found in the 'castellated Gothic' mansions of rural England, it is an undoubted fact that the basic principle underlying every style of architecture has been utilitarian. But that is not to say that this view was, in the minds of the builders, divorced from the idea of beauty. The function of the Greek column, for example, was purely utilitarian, but its evolution wholly æsthetic. Changing the ratio of diameter to height, as from the Doric to the Ionic forms, and the increasing elaboration of the capital, added nothing to the usefulness of the column itself. The same considerations apply largely to Gothic architecture.

Except for its neglect of beauty, Mr. Jones's article is wholly salutary. For three centuries architecture has been possessed of the demon of imitation. With the new instruments of steel and concrete, this age may hope to accomplish its exorcism.

P. DONNELLY

In defense of the King's English.

LONDON, ENGLAND

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

I have just read in your February number a lamentable article entitled 'A Matter of Pronunciation,' by Mr. Frank H. Vizetelly. Your contributor, so we are informed, is 'the learned lexicographer of the Funk and Wagnalls publications,' but his incontestable qualifications for that task do not entitle him to misinform your readers on the subject of the pronunciation by Englishmen of their own language.

May I point out to the learned professor — and, by your courtesy, Sir, to the readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* — that we have a standard for the pronunciation of the English language? It is that which is the common usage of well-bred, cultured (not 'cultchah'ed') Englishmen and Englishwomen. We do not speak of a 'lectchah,' nor do we say 'Oo noo' instead of 'Oh, no.' Where can the professor have wandered during his visits to London?

I learn with interest, and for the first time, that 'the best people of England to-day talk with a cockney voice'! Really, the readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* cannot be expected to swallow so absurd a statement, when, for the price of a dollar or less, they can hear Mr. Ronald Colman or Mr. Fred Kerr speak, in faultless fashion, the pure English of the well-bred Englishman.

Yours faithfully,

HARGRAVE STANDEN, COLONEL

On the authority of *Punch*.

NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

If any of your readers who are familiar with London were deceived by Mr. Vizetelly's statement that a famous thoroughfare in that city is not pronounced 'Pell Mell,' let me restore their faith by citing a stanza which was printed in *Punch*, February 18, 1931: —

As I was lately crossing where it needs the stoutest
nerve
To dodge the streams of traffic that so sinuously
swerve
At the bottom of Haymarket, I stumbled and I fell,
But struggled to my feet and reached the pavement
of Pall Mall.

ROBERT WITHINGTON

Doctors' bills again.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

We are all interested in hospital costs. Costs such as Dr. Belknap mentions in his December letter may be available to people in small towns, but are certainly far below what we have to pay here, and I have always understood that we pay less than people in large cities in the East, though we all pay far more than one would in Canada.

I have just had an operation in an excellent hospital, under the auspices of the Episcopal Church, which charges less than many other hospitals in town. My room, as cheap as any, was \$50 a week; the operating-room charge was \$20; surgical dressings and medicines added considerably to my bill. I had a local anæsthetic, so was spared a fee of from \$15 to \$50. I also did without a special nurse. Had I required special attention, I should have had to have three nurses at a total of \$18 a day; no nurse is allowed to work more than eight hours in this hospital. I came home with a practical nurse at \$5 a day. Trained nurses charge from \$7 a day up for private duty, and for contagious diseases may ask as much as \$12 a day.

Knowing I am a middle-aged woman, alone in the world, with a small income, the surgeon charged \$250 for what is considered a very slight operation.

Very truly yours,

ROMAINE L. POINDEXTER